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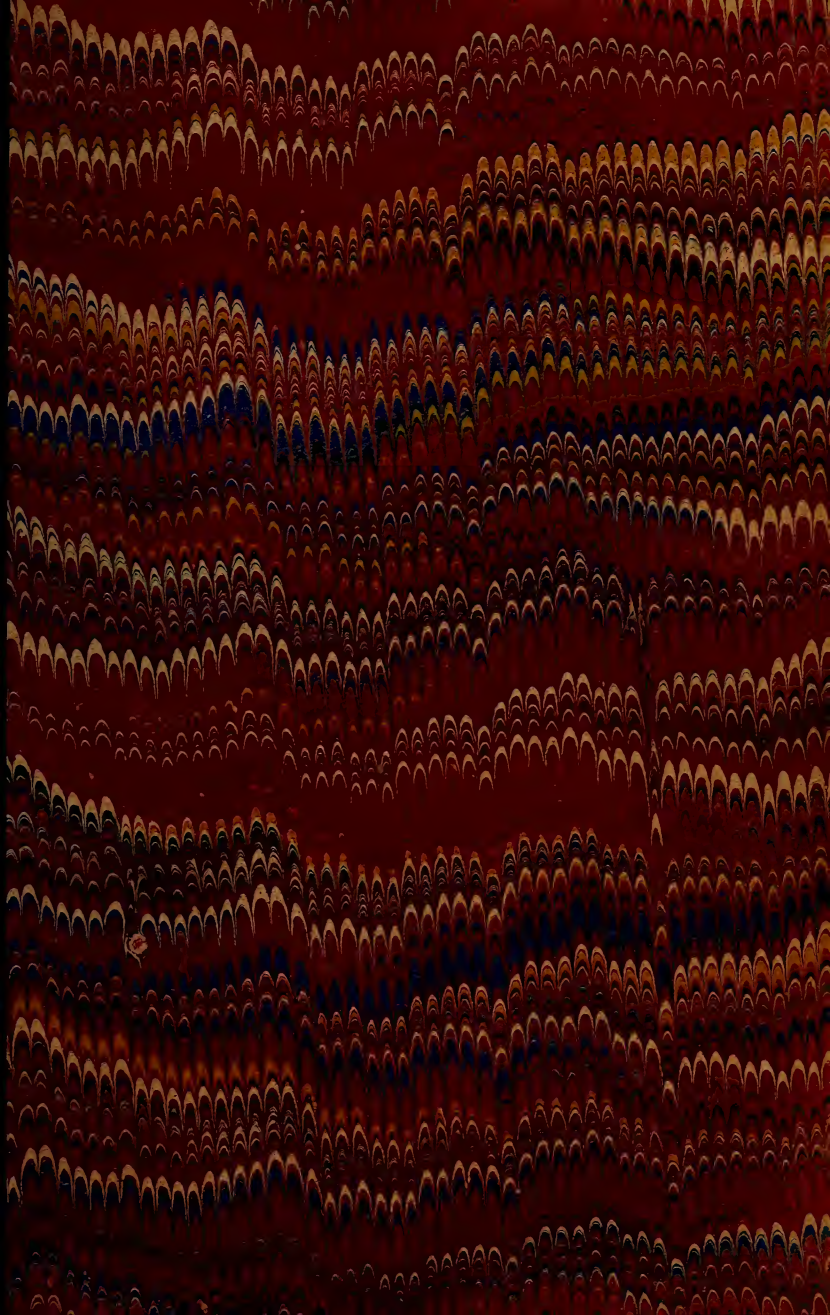
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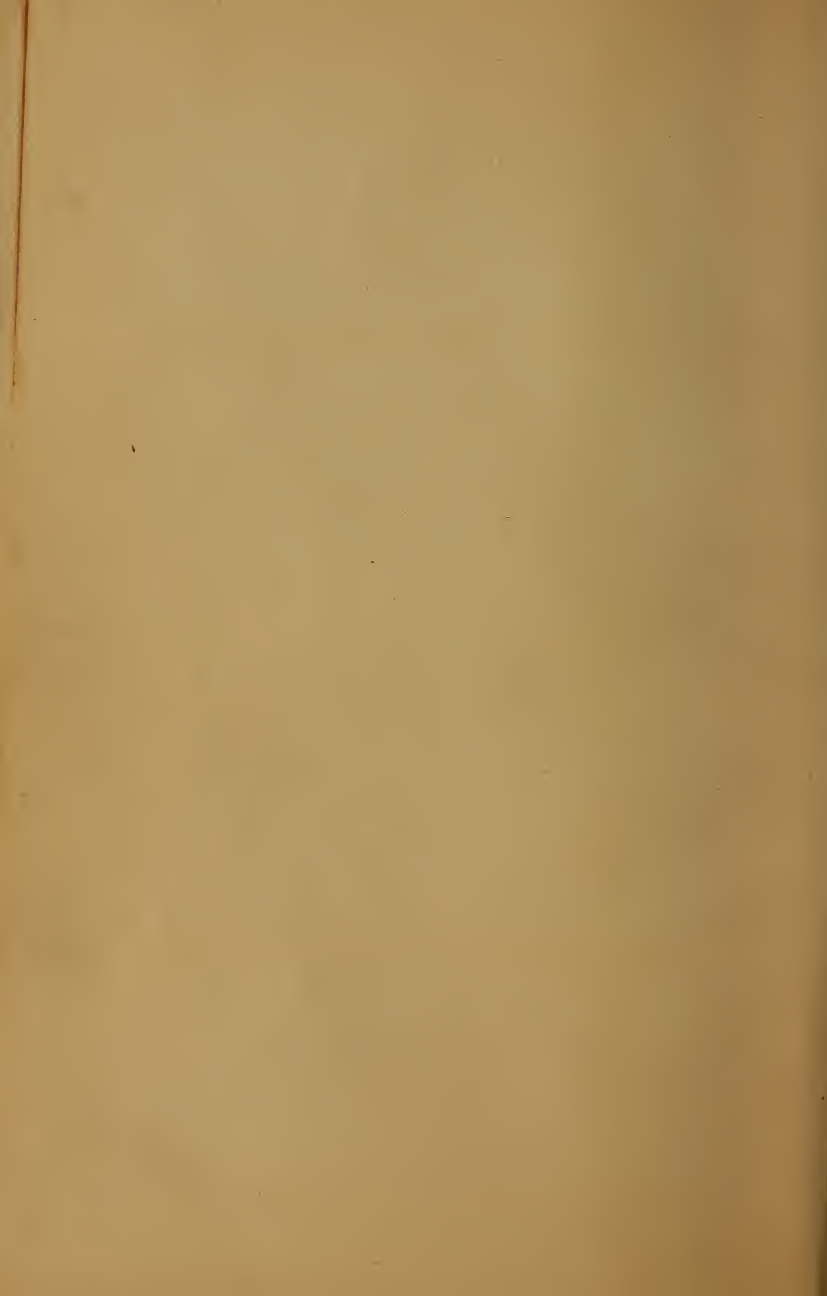
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







ENGLISH CLASSIC SERIES

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES

AN ESSAY ON
LORD BACON

— (BY) —

LORD MACAULAY.

NEW YORK:
CLARK & MAYNARD, PUBLISHERS,
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1886.

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AN ESSAY

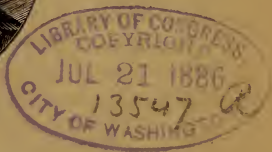
BY

LORD MACAULAY.

(ABRIDGED.)



LORD BACON.



WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

By ALBERT F. BLAISDELL,

AUTHOR OF "STUDY OF ENGLISH CLASSICS," ANNOTATED EDITIONS OF
"CHRISTMAS CAROL," "SKETCH-BOOK," "MEMORY QUOTA-
TIONS," "SHAKESPEARE SPEAKER," ETC., ETC.

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LIFE OF MACAULAY.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY, the great historian of England, was born at Rothley, near Leicester, in 1800, and was named Thomas Babington after his uncle. Macaulay's grandfather was a Scotch minister, and his father, Zachary, after having spent some time in Jamaica, returned to England, and joined Wilberforce and Clarkson in their efforts to abolish slavery in the British possessions. Macaulay was educated at Bristol and at Cambridge, where he gained great distinction, and twice won medals for his poems. He was also a member of the Union Debating Society, a famous club where young politicians tried their skill in the discussion of the affairs of State. He took his degree of M.A. in 1825, was called to the bar in 1826, and contributed extensively to Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*, in which his first literary efforts appeared, including among others the ballads of "The Spanish Armada" and "The Battle of Ivry." In 1825 he contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* his celebrated article on Milton, and this was succeeded by numerous others on various themes, historical, political, and literary, which were afterward collected and published separately.

Macaulay was a member of Parliament first for Colne, then for Leeds, and took part in the great discussions connected with the Reform Bill of 1832. In return for his services to his party, he was sent to India in 1834 as a member of the Council, and while there wrote his famous essays on *Lord Clive* and *Warren Hastings*. In 1839 Macaulay returned to England, was elected member for Edinburgh, and, during the eight years of his connection with that city, held successively the offices of Secretary at War and Paymaster-General of the Forces. In 1842 he gave to the world his spirited "Lays of Ancient Rome." In 1847 he displeased his Edinburgh supporters, and in a pet they rejected him; but in 1852 they re-elected him of their own accord, and in this way endeavored to atone for the past. He devoted the interval between these two dates to his *History of England*, the first two volumes of which were published in 1848, two others making their appearance in 1855. They form a magnificent fragment of historical writing, embracing a period of little more than twelve years, from the accession of James II. to the Peace of Ryswick, in 1697. A fifth volume, compiled from the papers which he left

behind, and bringing the work down to the death of William III., was published posthumously in 1859. He retired from Parliament in 1856, owing to failing health, and in the following year he was created a baron in consideration of his great literary merit. In 1859 he died suddenly of disease of the heart, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Lord Macaulay excelled as a poet and essayist, but he is chiefly illustrious as a historian. In the opening chapter of his *History of England* the author announces his intention to write a history from the accession of James II. down to a time within the memory of men still living. Its success was very great. History was no longer dry and uninviting, for Macaulay had become a painter as well as a chronicler. The events of the past are depicted in such fresh and striking coloring that they have all the interest of absolute novelty. We have life-like portraits of the great men of the age, landscapes and street scenes, spirit-stirring descriptions of insurrections and trials and sieges, and graphic pictures of manners and customs. Macaulay had a very wonderful memory, of which he was proud, and he was able to collect and retain stores of information from all manner of old books, papers, and parchments, and to make use of them in the production of his history. He is not always impartial, but sufficiently so to be considered the best authority on that portion of history with which he deals.

Macaulay's personal appearance was never better described than in two sentences of Praed's Introduction to Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*: "There comes up a short manly figure, marvelously upright, with a bad neckcloth, and one hand in his waistcoat pocket. Of regular beauty he had little to boast; but in faces where there is an expression of great power, or great good humor, or both, you do not regret its absence." This picture, in which every touch is correct, tells us all that there is to be told. He had a massive head, and features of a powerful and rugged cast; but so constantly lighted up by every joyful and ennobling emotion, that it mattered little if, when absolutely quiescent, his face was rather homely than handsome. While conversing at table, no one thought him otherwise than good-looking; but when he rose he was seen to be short and stout in figure. He at all times sat and stood straight, full, and square. He dressed badly, but not cheaply. His clothes, though ill put on, were good, and his wardrobe was always enormously over-stocked. Macaulay was bored in the best of society, but took unceasing delight in children. He was the best of playfellows unrivaled in the invention of games, and never weary of repeating them.

LORD MACAULAY. 1800-1859.

"I always prophesied his greatness, from the first moment I saw him, then a very young and unknown man. There are no limits to his knowledge, on small subjects as well as great. He is like a book in breeches."—*Sydney Smith*.

"His learning is prodigious; and perhaps the chief defects of his composition arise from the exuberant riches of the stores from which they are drawn. When warmed in his subject, he is thoroughly in earnest, and his language, in consequence, goes direct to the heart."—*Alison*.

"The exact style, the antitheses of ideas, the harmonious construction, the artfully balanced paragraphs, the vigorous summaries, the regular sequence of thoughts, the frequent comparisons, the fine arrangement of the whole—not an idea or phrase of his writings in which the talent and the desire to explain does not shine forth."—*Taine*.

"Behind the external show and glittering vesture of his thoughts—beneath all his pomp of diction, aptness of illustration, splendor of imagery, and epigrammatic point and glare—a careful eye can easily discern the movement of a powerful and cultivated intellect, as it successively appears in the the well-trained logician, the discriminating critic, the comprehensive thinker, the practical and far-sighted statesman, and the student of universal literature."—*E. P. Whipple*.

"Macaulay's essays, are remarkable for their brilliant rhetorical power, their splendid tone of coloring, and their affluence of illustration with a wide range of reading, and the most docile and retentive memory. He pours over his theme all the treasures of a richly-stored mind, and sheds light upon it from all quarters. He excels in the delineation of historical characters, and in the art of carrying his reader into a distant period and reproducing the past with the distinctness of the present."—*George S. Hillard*.

PRINCIPAL WORKS

Macaulay excelled as a POET, ESSAYIST, ORATOR, and HISTORIAN.

As a Poet: Of the first fruits of our author's poetical genius perhaps the most admired are *The Battle of Ivry* and *The Spanish Armada*. In 1842, Macaulay gave to the world his *Lays of Ancient Rome*, consisting of the soul-stirring narrations of "Horatius Cocles," "Battle of Lake of Regillus," "Death of Virginia," and "Prophecy of Capys."

As an Essayist: Macaulay's essay on Milton, published in the *Edinburgh Review* for Aug., 1825, was followed by essays, in all about forty, from the same pen for nearly a score of years, articles unsurpassed in varied and accurate learning, and in fervid eloquence and brilliancy, by any composition of the kind in the English language. The following is a list of the principal essays, with the years of publication, for the most part published in the *Edinburgh Review*: Milton, 1825; Machiavelli, 1827; Dryden, 1828; History, 1828; Hallam's Constitutional History, 1828; Southey's Colloquies on Society, 1830; Montgomery's Poems, 1830; Southey's Edition of the Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, 1830; Moore's Byron, 1831; Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson, 1831; Nugent's Hampden, 1831; Lord Burleigh and his Times, 1832; Mirabeau, 1832; War of the Spanish Succession, 1833; Horace Walpole, 1833; Earl of Chatham, 1834; Sir James Mackintosh, 1835; Lord Bacon, 1837; Sir William Temple, 1838; Church and State, 1839; LORD CLIVE, 1840; Ranke's History of the Popes, 1840; Comic Dramatists of the Restoration, 1841; Lord Holland, 1841; WARREN HASTINGS, OCT., 1841; Frederick the Great, 1842; Madame D'Arblay, 1843; Joseph Addison, 1843; Earl of Chatham, 1844; Barere's Memoirs, 1844; Athenian Orators; Mitford's Greece, and Mill's Essay on Government.

Biographies of Dr. Johnson, Bunyan, William Pitt, Goldsmith, and others, written for the eighth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1857-8), were among the latest productions of Macaulay's pen.

As an Orator: Macaulay's speeches, parliamentary and miscellaneous, number nearly one hundred, generally held to be some of the most eloquent and instructive ever delivered before the English public.

As a Historian: In 1843 appeared the first two volumes of Macaulay's

History of England, "from the accession of King James the Second down to a time which is within the memory of men still living." The third and fourth volumes were issued in 1855. The success of these volumes was great and immediate. A fifth volume, comprising all that he left ready for the press, and bringing the work down to the end of the year 1701, was published after his death. The great work thus remains a fragment of that originally projected.

REFERENCES.

For any desired information concerning Macaulay and his writings, consult, besides the ordinary reference books, Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, a work of the deepest interest and full of all manner of details about the personal life of England's great historian. There is a little book by Adams, called *Life Sketches of Macaulay*, interesting from its anecdotes and sketches of Macaulay's personal career. E. P. Whipple has written one of the ablest criticisms of Macaulay's characteristics as an essayist which has ever been published. This article, from which we quote elsewhere, and for which Macaulay expressed great admiration, can be found in the first volume of Whipple's *Essays*. See also a scholarly essay by Peter Bayne; consult very full articles in "Allibone," the "Encyclopedia Britannica," and the numerous references in Poole's *Index to Periodical Literature*.

INTRODUCTION.

A CAREFUL study of Macaulay's essay on Lord Bacon will accomplish two things for the young student. First, he will become familiar with one of the ablest essays of England's brilliant historian. Masterly in its general plan, scholarly in its faultless knowledge of the events and men of this wonderful era in English history, attractive in its style as the page of fiction, this noble essay will serve to stimulate the student to read other works by the same great writer.

Second, it must be a dull reader who is not stirred by reading this essay to extend his studies into the almost exhaustless fields of Elizabethan literature. Lord Bacon played a leading part in that age, which is characterized by features which cause it to stand alone in the literary history of the world. It was a period of the most intense intellectual activity.

Hence, to get even a respectable understanding of the scope of this essay on Lord Bacon and some appreciation of

"Those melodious bursts that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still,"

the student needs to lay a foundation deep and strong by a great deal of collateral reading. Such histories as Miss Strickland's *Queen Elizabeth* and Mr. J. R. Green's *History of England* will supply the most elementary historical facts, while Whipple's *Literature of the Elizabethan Age* and Spedding's elaborate biography of Bacon will prove valuable helps to an elementary consideration of the Baconian philosophy.

LORD BACON.

PREFATORY NOTE.

It is just fifty years ago that Lord Macaulay sent from India "an article of interminable length about Lord Bacon" to the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*. The brilliant essayist had some misgivings about the length of his essay, but gave as an apology that the subject was of such vast extent that he could easily have made the article twice as long. Lord Jeffrey, to whom the manuscript was submitted for abridgment by the editor, said that "it would be worse than paring down the Pitt diamond to fit the old setting of a dowager's ring."

In July, 1837, the article appeared entire, occupying one hundred and four pages of the *Review*; and accompanied by an apology for its length in the shape of one of those editorial appeals to "the intelligent scholar" and "the best class of our readers" which never fail of success. "I never bestowed so much care," said Macaulay, in a private letter to the editor of the *Review*, "on anything that I have written. There is not a sentence in the latter half of the article which has not been repeatedly recast. I have no expectation that the popularity of the article will bear any proportion to the trouble that I have expended on it. But the trouble has been so great a pleasure to me that I have already been greatly overpaid."

This famous essay by Macaulay has been universally regarded as one of the best efforts of this great essayist. The young student will do well to read and reread it, not only to become familiar with it as a model of brilliant English, but also to a better understanding of the great men and measures of the times of good Queen Bess.

The length of the essay is such that the editor has been obliged to abridge it. The essay in its abridged form is complete in itself, and no part of Macaulay's language has been changed.

Introduction.—1. There is scarcely any delusion which has a better claim to be indulgently treated than that under the influence of which a man ascribes every moral excellence to those who have left imperishable monuments of their genius. The causes of this error lie deep in the inmost recesses of human nature. We are all inclined to judge of others as we find them. Our estimate of a character always depends much on the manner in which that character affects our interests and passions. We find it difficult to think well of
10 those by whom we are thwarted or depressed; and we are ready to admit every excuse for the vices of those who are useful or agreeable to us. This is, we believe, one of those illusions to which the whole human race is subject, and which experience and reflection can only partially remove. Hence it is that the moral character of a man eminent in letters or in the fine arts is treated, often by contemporaries, almost by posterity, with extraordinary tenderness. The world derives pleasure and advantage from the performances of such a man. The number of those who suffer by his personal vices is small,
20 even in his own time, when compared with the number of those to whom his talents are a source of gratification. In a few years all those whom he has injured disappear; but his works remain, and are a source of delight to millions.

2. A great writer is the friend and benefactor of his readers; and they cannot but judge of him under the deluding influence of friendship and gratitude. We all know how unwilling we are to admit the truth of any disgraceful story about a person whose society we like, and from whom we have received favors; how long we struggle against evidence, how
30 fondly, when the facts cannot be disputed, we cling to the hope that there may be some explanation or some extenuating circumstance with which we are unacquainted. Just such is the feeling which a man of liberal education entertains towards the great minds of former ages. The debt which he owes to them is incalculable. They have guided him to truth. They have filled his mind with noble and graceful images. They have stood by him in all vicissitudes—comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude. These friendships

are exposed to no danger from the occurrences by which other attachments are weakened or dissolved. Time glides on; fortune is inconstant; tempers are soured; bonds which seemed indissoluble are daily sundered by interest, by emulation, or by caprice. But no such cause can affect the silent converse which we hold with the highest of human intellects. That placid intercourse is disturbed by no jealousies or resentments. These are the old friends who are never seen with new faces, who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity. With the dead there is no rivalry. In the dead there is no change. Plato is never sullen. Cervantes is never petulant. Demosthenes never comes unseasonably. Dante never stays too long. No difference of political opinion can alienate Cicero.

3. Nothing, then, can be more natural than that a person endowed with sensibility and imagination should entertain a respectful and affectionate feeling towards those great men with whose minds he holds daily communion. Yet nothing can be more certain than that such men have not always deserved to be regarded with respect or affection. Some writers, whose works will continue to instruct and delight mankind to the remotest ages, have been placed in such situations that their actions and motives are as well known to us as the actions and motives of one human being can be known to another; and unhappily their conduct has not always been such as an impartial judge can contemplate with approbation. But the fanaticism of the devout worshiper of genius is proof against all evidence and all argument. The character of his idol is matter of faith; and the province of faith is not to be invaded by reason. He maintains his superstition with a credulity as boundless and a zeal as unscrupulous as can be found in the most ardent partisans of the religious or political factions. The most decisive proofs are rejected; the plainest rules of morality are explained away; extensive and important portions of history are completely distorted.

49. **Plato**, the famous Greek philosopher. **Cervantes**, the author of *Don Quixote*. **Demosthenes**, the distinguished Greek orator. **Dante**, the celebrated Italian poet. **Cicero**, the famous Roman orator.

Bacon's Early Career.—1. It is hardly necessary to say that Francis Bacon was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who held the great seal of England during the first twenty years of the reign of Elizabeth. The fame of the father has been thrown into shade by that of the son. But Sir Nicholas was no ordinary man. He belonged to a set of men whom it is easier
80 to describe collectively than separately; whose minds were formed by one system of discipline; who belonged to one rank in society, to one university, to one party, to one sect, to one administration; and who resembled each other so much in talents, in opinions, in habits, in fortunes, that one character, we had almost said one life, may, to a considerable extent, serve for them all.

2. The second wife of Sir Nicholas and mother of Francis Bacon, was Anne, one of the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, a man of distinguished learning who had been tutor to Edward
90 the Sixth. Sir Anthony had paid considerable attention to the education of his daughters, and lived to see them all splendidly and happily married. Their classical acquirements made them conspicuous even among the women of fashion of that age.

3. Francis Bacon, the youngest son of Sir Nicholas, was born at York House, his father's residence in the Strand, on the twenty-second of January, 1561. The health of Francis was very delicate; and to this circumstance may be partly attributed that gravity of carriage and that love of sedentary pursuits which distinguished him from other boys. Everybody knows
100 how much his premature readiness of wit and sobriety of deportment amused the Queen, and how she used to call him her young Lord Keeper. We are told that, while still a mere child, he stole away from his playfellows to a vault, for the purpose of investigating the cause of a singular echo which he had observed there. It is certain that at only twelve, he

79. **Set of men.**—In the complete text, Macaulay describes in detail the new and remarkable class of politicians that became a part of the history of this time. Sir Nicholas held high rank with any of his illustrious associates, "generally considered as ranking next to Burleigh."

95. **Strand (London)**—Houses were first built upon the Strand about 1353. Somerset and other palaces were re-erected 1549–1605.

101. **The Queen.**—Elizabeth was queen of England at this time. She had been queen for three years, when Bacon was born. She died in 1603.

busied himself with very ingenious speculations on the art of legerdemain. These are trifles. But the eminence which Bacon afterwards attained makes them interesting.

4. In the thirteenth year of his age he was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge. That celebrated school of learning¹¹⁰ enjoyed the peculiar favor of the Lord Treasurer and the Lord Keeper, and acknowledged the advantages which it derived from their patronage in a public letter which bears date just a month after the admission of Francis Bacon. It has often been said that Bacon, while still at college, planned that great intellectual revolution with which his name is inseparably connected. The evidence on this subject, however, is hardly sufficient to prove what is in itself so improbable as that any definite scheme of that kind should have been so early formed, even by so powerful and active a mind. But it is certain that,¹²⁰ after a residence of three years at Cambridge, Bacon departed, carrying with him a profound contempt for the course of study pursued there, and a fixed conviction that the system of academic education in England was radically vicious.

5. In his sixteenth year he visited Paris, and resided there for some time, under the care of Sir Amias Paulet, Elizabeth's minister at the French court, and one of the ablest and most upright of the many valuable servants whom she employed. We have abundant proof that during his stay on the Continent he did not neglect literary and scientific pursuits. But his at-¹³⁰tention seems to have been chiefly directed to statistics and diplomacy. It was at this time that he wrote those "Notes on the State of Europe" which are printed in his works. He studied the principles of the art of deciphering with great interest, and invented one cipher so ingenious that, many years later, he thought it deserving of a place in the "De Augmentis." In February, 1580, while engaged in these pursuits, he received intelligence of the almost sudden death of his father, and instantly returned to England.

Struggles for Legal Preferment.—1. His prospects were¹⁴⁰ greatly overcast by this event. He was most desirous to obtain a provision which might enable him to devote himself to literature and politics. He applied to the government; and it

seems strange that he should have applied in vain. His wishes were moderate. His hereditary claims on the administration were great. He had himself been favorably noticed by the Queen. His uncle was Prime Minister. His own talents were such as any minister might have been eager to enlist in the public service. But his solicitations were unsuccessful. The
 150 truth is that the Cecils disliked him, and did all that they could decently do to keep him down. It has never been alleged that Bacon had done anything to merit this dislike; nor is it at all probable that a man whose temper was naturally mild, whose manners were courteous, who, through life, nursed his fortunes with the utmost care, and who was fearful even to a fault of offending the powerful, would have given any just cause of displeasure to a kinsman who had the means of rendering him essential service and of doing him irreparable injury.

2. The real explanation, we believe, is this: Robert Cecil,
 160 the Treasurer's second son, was younger by a few months than Bacon; he had been educated with the utmost care, had been initiated, while still a boy, in the mysteries of diplomacy and court-intrigue, and was just at this time about to be produced on the stage of public life. The wish nearest to Burleigh's heart was that his own greatness might descend to his favorite child. But even Burleigh's fatherly partiality could hardly prevent him from perceiving that Robert, with all his abilities and acquirements, was no match for his cousin Francis. This seems to us the only rational explanation of the Treasurer's conduct.

3. Whatever Burleigh's motives might be, his purpose was
 170 unalterable. The supplications which Francis addressed to his uncle and aunt were earnest, humble, and almost servile. He was the most promising and accomplished young man of his time. His father had been the brother-in-law, the most useful colleague, the nearest friend, of the Minister. But all this availed poor Francis nothing. He was forced, much against his will, to betake himself to the study of the law. He

147. **Prime Minister.**—William Cecil, commonly known as Lord Burleigh (1520-1598), one of England's great statesmen, was prime minister at this time.

159. **Robert Cecil** (about 1550-1612), second son of Lord Burleigh, succeeded his father as prime minister. He was a statesman of immense energy and far-reaching sagacity.

was admitted to Gray's Inn; and, during some years, he labored there in obscurity.

4. What the extent of his legal attainments may have been ¹⁸⁰ it is difficult to say. It was not hard for a man of his powers to acquire that very moderate portion of technical knowledge which, when joined to quickness, tact, wit, ingenuity, eloquence, and knowledge of the world, is sufficient to raise an advocate to the highest professional eminence. The general opinion appears to have been that which was on one occasion expressed by Elizabeth: "Bacon," said she, "hath a great wit and much learning; but in law showeth to the uttermost of his knowledge, and is not deep."

5. It is certain that no man in that age, or, indeed, during ¹⁹⁰ the century and a half which followed, was better acquainted than Bacon with the philosophy of law. His technical knowledge was quite sufficient—with the help of his admirable talents and of his insinuating address—to procure clients. He rose very rapidly into business, and soon entertained hopes of being called within the bar. He applied to Lord Burleigh for that purpose, but received a testy refusal. Of the grounds of that refusal we can, in some measure, judge by Bacon's answer, which is still extant. It seems that the old lord, whose temper, age, and gout had by no means altered for the better, ²⁰⁰ and who loved to mark his dislike of the showy, quick-witted young men of the rising generation, took this opportunity to read Francis a very sharp lecture on his vanity and want of respect for his betters. Francis returned a most submissive reply, thanked the Treasurer for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. Strangers, meanwhile, were less unjust to the young barrister than his nearest kinsman had been.

6. In his twenty-sixth year he became a bencher of his Inn; and two years later he was appointed Lent reader. At length, in 1590, he obtained for the first time some show of favor ²¹⁰ from the court. He was sworn in Queen's Counsel extraordinary. But this mark of honor was not accompanied by any pecuniary emolument. He continued, therefore, to solicit his

178. **Gray's Inn.**—The name given to one of the four celebrated law-colleges in London.

powerful relatives for some provision which might enable him to live without drudging at his profession. He bore, with a patience and serenity which, we fear, bordered on meanness, the morose humors of his uncle, and the sneering reflections which his cousin cast on speculative men, lost in philosophical dreams, and too wise to be capable of transacting public business. At length the Cecils were generous enough to procure for him the reversion of the registrarship of the Star Chamber. This was a lucrative place; but, as many years elapsed before it fell in, he was still under the necessity of laboring for his daily bread.

7. In the Parliament which was called in 1593 he sat as member for the county of Middlesex, and soon attained eminence as a debater. It is easy to perceive from the scanty remains of his oratory that the same compactness of expression and richness of fancy which appear in his writings characterized his speeches; and that his extensive acquaintance with literature and history enabled him to entertain his audience with a vast variety of illustrations and allusions which were generally happy and apposite, but which were probably not least pleasing to the taste of that age when they were such as would now be thought childish or pedantic.

8. Ben Jonson, a most unexceptionable judge, has described Bacon's eloquence in words which, though often quoted, will bear to be quoted again: "No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end."

Steps towards Political Success.—1. Bacon tried to play a very difficult game in politics. He wished to be at once a

222. **Star Chamber.**—The council-chamber of the Old Palace at Westminster, London, built by Henry VIII. This chamber was so called from the stars upon the ceiling. Here was the court where every punishment but death could be inflicted.

236. **Ben Jonson** (1573-1637).—An illustrious dramatist, one of the most learned men of his time.

favorite at court and popular with the multitude. If any man could have succeeded in this attempt, a man of talents so rare, of judgment so prematurely ripe, of temper so calm, and of manner so plausible, might have been expected to succeed. Nor, indeed, did he wholly fail. Once, however, he indulged in a burst of patriotism which caused him a long and bitter remorse, and which he never ventured to repeat. The court asked for large subsidies and for speedy payment. The remains of Bacon's speech breathe all the spirit of the Long Parliament. "The gentlemen," said he, "must sell their plate, and the farmers their brass pots ere this will be paid; and for us, we are here to search the wounds of the realm, and not to skim them over. The dangers are these: first, we shall breed discontent and endanger her majesty's safety, which must consist more in the love of the people than their wealth. Secondly, this being granted in this sort, other princes hereafter will look for the like; so that we shall put an evil precedent on ourselves and our posterity; and in histories, it is to be observed, of all nations the English are not to be subject, base, or taxable."

2. The Queen and her ministers resented this outbreak of public spirit in the highest manner. Indeed, many an honest member of the House of Commons had, for a much smaller matter, been sent to the Tower by the proud and hot-blooded Tudors. The young patriot condescended to make the most abject apologies. He adjured the Lord Treasurer to show some favor to his poor servant and ally. He bemoaned himself to the Lord Keeper in a letter which may keep in countenance the most unmanly of the epistles which Cicero wrote during his banishment. The lesson was not thrown away. Bacon never offended in the same manner again.

3. He was now satisfied that he had little to hope from the patronage of those powerful kinsmen whom he had solicited during twelve years with such meek pertinacity; and he began

256. **Long Parliament.**—The Parliament memorable as the "Long Parliament" met on Nov. 3, 1640.

272. **Tudors.**—The House of Tudor ruled England from the accession of Henry VII. to the death of Elizabeth (1485-1603).

to look towards a different quarter. Among the courtiers of Elizabeth had lately appeared a new favorite—young, noble, wealthy, accomplished, eloquent, brave, generous, aspiring; a favorite who had obtained from the gray-headed queen such marks of regard as she had scarce vouchsafed to Leicester in the season of the passions; who was at once the ornament of the palace and the idol of the city; who was the common patron of men of letters and of men of the sword. The calm
 290 prudence which had enabled Burleigh to shape his course through so many dangers, and the vast experience which he had acquired in dealing with two generations of colleagues and rivals, seemed scarcely sufficient to support him in this new competition; and Robert Cecil sickened with fear and envy as he contemplated the rising fame and influence of Essex.

4. Nothing in the political conduct of Essex entitles him to esteem; and the pity with which we regard his early and terrible end is diminished by the consideration that he put to hazard the lives and fortunes of his most attached friends, and
 300 endeavored to throw the whole country into confusion, for objects purely personal. Still, it is impossible not to be deeply interested for a man so brave, high-spirited, and generous; for a man who, while he conducted himself towards his sovereign with a boldness such as was then found in no other subject, conducted himself towards his dependents with a delicacy such as has rarely been found in any other patron. Unlike the vulgar herd of benefactors, he desired to inspire, not gratitude, but affection. He tried to make those whom he befriended feel towards him as towards an equal. His mind, ardent, sus-
 310 ceptible, naturally disposed to admiration of all that is great and beautiful, was fascinated by the genius and the accomplishments of Bacon. A close friendship was soon formed between them—a friendship destined to have a dark, a mournful, a shameful end.

286. **Leicester.**—The Earl of Leicester (1531-1588). The famous favorite courtier of Queen Elizabeth. The romantic career of this great but wicked man is most skillfully woven into Scott's historical novel called *Kenilworth*.

295. **Essex.**—The Earl of Essex (1567-1601) became a favorite of Queen Elizabeth after the death of Leicester. The foolhardy career of this able but rash man is merely outlined by Macaulay. Read the histories of this time for details. Essex was beheaded in 1601.

5. In 1594 the office of Attorney-General became vacant, and Bacon hoped to obtain it. Essex made his friend's cause his own, sued, expostulated, promised, threatened—but all in vain. It is probable that the dislike felt by the Cecils for Bacon had been increased by the connection which he had lately formed with the Earl.

When the office of Attorney-General was filled up, the Earl pressed the Queen to make Bacon Solicitor-General, and, on this occasion, the old Lord Treasurer professed himself not unfavorable to his nephew's pretensions. But, after a contest which lasted more than a year and a half, and in which Essex, to use his own words, “spent all his power, might, authority, and amity,” the place was given to another. Essex felt this disappointment keenly, but found consolation in the most munificent and delicate liberality. He presented Bacon with an estate worth near two thousand pounds, situated at Twicken-³³⁰ham; and this, as Bacon owned many years after, “with so kind and noble circumstances, as the manner was worth more than the matter.”

6. It was soon after these events that Bacon first appeared before the public as a writer. Early in 1597 he published a small volume of essays, which was afterwards enlarged by successive additions to many times its original bulk. This little work was, as it well deserved to be, exceedingly popular. It was reprinted in a few months; it was translated into Latin, French, and Italian; and it seems to have at once established³⁴⁰ the literary reputation of its author. But, though Bacon's reputation rose, his fortunes were still depressed. He was in great pecuniary difficulties; and, on one occasion, was arrested in the street at the suit of a goldsmith for a debt of three hundred pounds.

Betrayal of Essex.—1. The kindness of Essex was in the

336. **Small volume of essays.**—The first edition of the *Essays* was published in 1597, at the time when Shakespeare was doing his greatest work. They were only ten in number, but Bacon subsequently added to these, making fifty-eight essays in the edition published in 1625, the year before his death. The word *essay* has changed its application somewhat since the days of Bacon. The word then bore its original sense of a slight suggestive sketch, whereas it is now commonly employed to denote an elaborate and finished composition.

mean time indefatigable. In 1596 he sailed on his memorable expedition to the coast of Spain. At the very moment of his embarkation, he wrote to several of his friends, commending
 350 to them, during his own absence, the interests of Bacon. He returned, after performing the most brilliant military exploit that was achieved on the Continent by English arms during the long interval which elapsed between the battle of Agincourt and that of Blenheim. His valor, his talents, his humane and generous disposition, had made him the idol of his countrymen and had extorted praise from the enemies whom he had conquered. He had always been proud and headstrong; and his splendid success seems to have rendered his faults more offensive than ever. But to his friend Francis he
 360 was still the same.

2. The fortunes of Essex had now reached their height and began to decline. He possessed, indeed, all the qualities which raise men to greatness rapidly. But he had neither the virtues nor the vices which enable men to retain greatness long. His frankness, his keen sensibility to insult and injustice, were by no means agreeable to a sovereign naturally impatient of opposition, and accustomed, during forty years, to the most extravagant flattery and the most abject submission. The daring and contemptuous manner in which he bade defiance
 370 to his enemies excited their deadly hatred. His administration in Ireland was unfortunate, and in many respects highly blamable. Though his brilliant courage and his impetuous activity fitted him admirably for such enterprises as that of Cadiz, he did not possess the caution, patience, and resolution necessary for the conduct of a protracted war, in which difficulties were to be gradually surmounted, in which much discomfort was to be endured, and in which few splendid exploits could be achieved. For the civil duties of his

353. **Agincourt.**—A village in France celebrated for a bloody battle between the English and French, Oct. 25, 1415.

354. **Blenheim.**—A village in Bavaria memorable on account of Marlborough's great victory over the French, Aug. 13, 1704.

374. **Cadiz.**—A powerful fleet was fitted out in 1596 to wage war in Spain. Essex commanded the land forces; Lord Effingham the navy. Cadiz was taken chiefly through the impetuous valor of Essex, who disregarded the more cautious counsels of Effingham.

high place he was still less qualified. Though eloquent and accomplished, he was in no sense a statesman. The multitude, 380 indeed, still continued to regard even his faults with fondness; but the Court had ceased to give him credit even for the merit which he really possessed. The person on whom, during the decline of his influence, he chiefly depended, to whom he confided his perplexities, whose advice he solicited, whose intercession he employed, was his friend Bacon. The lamentable truth must be told. This friend, so loved, so trusted, bore a principal part in ruining the Earl's fortunes, in shedding his blood, and in blackening his memory.

3. But let us be just to Bacon. We believe that to the last 390 he had no wish to injure Essex. Nay, we believe that he sincerely exerted himself to serve Essex, as long as he thought that he could serve Essex without injuring himself. The advice which he gave to his noble benefactor was generally most judicious. He did all in his power to dissuade the Earl from accepting the government of Ireland. "For," says he, "I did as plainly see his overthrow, chained as it were by destiny to that journey, as it is possible for a man to ground a judgment upon future contingents." The prediction was accomplished. Essex returned in disgrace. 400

4. Bacon attempted to mediate between his friend and the Queen; and, we believe, honestly employed all his address for that purpose. But the task which he had undertaken was too difficult, delicate, and perilous, even for so wary and dexterous an agent. He had to manage two spirits equally proud, resentful, and ungovernable. At Essex House, he had to calm the rage of a young hero incensed by multiplied wrongs and humiliations, and then to pass to Whitehall for the purpose of soothing the peevishness of a sovereign whose temper, never very gentle, had been rendered morbidly irritable by age, by 410 declining health, and by the long habit of listening to flattery and exacting implicit obedience. It is hard to serve two masters. Situated as Bacon was, it was scarcely possible for

408. **Whitehall** (London), built before the middle of the 13th century. It was purchased by Henry VIII. of Cardinal Wolsey in 1530. At this period it became the residence of the court. Queen Elizabeth, who died at Richmond in 1603, was brought thence to Whitehall, by water, in a grand procession.

him to shape his course so as not to give one or both of his employers reason to complain. For a time he acted as fairly as, in circumstances so embarrassing, could reasonably be expected. At length he found that, while he was trying to prop the fortunes of another, he was in danger of shaking his own. He had disobliged both the parties whom he wished to reconcile. Essex thought him wanting in zeal as a friend; Elizabeth thought him wanting in duty as a subject. The Earl looked on him as a spy of the Queen; the Queen as a creature of the Earl. The reconciliation which he had labored to effect appeared utterly hopeless. A thousand signs—legible to eyes far less keen than his—announced that the fall of his patron was at hand. He shaped his course accordingly.

5. When Essex was brought before the council to answer for his conduct in Ireland, Bacon, after a faint attempt to excuse himself from taking part against his friend, submitted himself to the Queen's pleasure, and appeared at the bar in support of the charges. But a darker scene was behind. The unhappy young nobleman, made reckless by despair, ventured on a rash and criminal enterprise, which rendered him liable to the highest penalties of the law. What course was Bacon to take? This was one of those conjunctures which show what men are. To a high-minded man, wealth, power, court favor, even personal safety, would have appeared of no account when opposed to friendship, gratitude, and honor. Bacon did not even preserve neutrality. He appeared as counsel for the prosecution. In that situation he did not confine himself to what would have been amply sufficient to procure a verdict. He employed all his wit, his rhetoric, and his learning, not to insure a conviction—for the circumstances were such that a conviction was inevitable—but to deprive the unhappy prisoner of all those excuses which, though legally of no value, yet tended to diminish the moral guilt of the crime, and which, therefore, though they could not justify the peers in pronouncing an acquittal, might incline the Queen to grant a pardon.

6. Essex was convicted. Bacon made no effort to save him, though the Queen's feelings were such that he might have

pleaded his benefactor's cause, possibly with success, certainly without any serious danger to himself. The unhappy nobleman was executed. His fate excited strong, perhaps unreasonable, feelings of compassion and indignation. The Queen was received by the citizens of London with gloomy looks and faint acclamations. She thought it expedient to publish a vindication of her late proceedings. The faithless friend who had assisted in taking the Earl's life was now employed to murder the Earl's fame. The Queen had seen some of Bacon's writings and had been pleased with them. He was accordingly selected to write "A Declaration of the Practices and Treasons attempted and committed by Robert, Earl of Essex," which was printed by authority. 460

7. The real explanation of all this is perfectly obvious; and nothing but a partiality amounting to a ruling passion could cause anybody to miss it. [The moral qualities of Bacon were not of a high order. We do not say that he was a bad man. He was not inhuman or tyrannical. He bore with meekness his high civil honors, and the far higher honors gained by his intellect. He was very seldom, if ever, provoked into treating any person with malignity and insolence. No man more readily held up the left cheek to those who had smitten the right. No man was more expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath. He was never charged, by any accuser entitled to the smallest credit, with licentious habits. His even temper, his flowing courtesy, the general respectability of his demeanor, made a favorable impression on those who saw him in situations which do not severely try the principles. His faults were—we write it with pain—coldness of heart and meanness of spirit. He seems to have been incapable of feeling strong affection, of facing great dangers, of making great sacrifices. His desires were set on things below. Wealth, precedence, titles, patronage, the mace, the seals, the coronet, large houses, fair gardens, rich manors, massy services of plate, gay hangings, curious cabinets, had as great attractions for him as for any of the courtiers who dropped on their knees in the dirt when Elizabeth passed by, and then hastened home 470 480

to write to the King of Scots that her Grace seemed to be
 490 breaking fast. For these objects he had stooped to everything, and endured everything.

8. For these he joined, and for these he forsook, Lord Essex. He continued to plead his patron's cause with the Queen as long as he thought that by pleading that cause he might serve himself. Nay, he went farther; for his feelings, though not warm, were kind; he pleaded that cause as long as he thought that he could plead it without injury to himself. But when it became evident that Essex was going headlong to his ruin, Bacon began to tremble for his own fortunes. What he
 500 had to fear would not indeed have been very alarming to a man of lofty character. It was not death. It was not imprisonment. It was the loss of court favor. It was the being left behind by others in the career of ambition. It was the having leisure to finish the "*Instauratio Magna*." The Queen looked coldly on him. The courtiers began to consider him as a marked man. He determined to change his line of conduct, and to proceed in a new course with so much vigor as to make up for lost time. When once he had determined to act against his friend, knowing himself to be suspected, he acted
 510 with more zeal than would have been necessary or justifiable if he had been employed against a stranger. He exerted his professional talents to shed the Earl's blood, and his literary talents to blacken the Earl's memory.

It is certain that his conduct excited at the time great and general disapprobation. While Elizabeth lived, indeed, this disapprobation, though deeply felt, was not loudly expressed.]

Bacon gains the Royal Favor.—1. But a great change was at hand. The health of the Queen had long been decaying; and the operation of age and disease was now assisted by
 520 acute mental suffering. The pitiable melancholy of her last days has generally been ascribed to her fond regret for Essex.

489. **King of Scots.**—The son of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, who succeeded Queen Elizabeth on her death, in 1603, as King James I. of England. He was king from 1603 to 1625.

520. **Mental Suffering.**—The student will be pleased to consult the various histories of this time for interesting details of the last days of Queen Elizabeth. This subject is fully discussed in Miss Strickland's "*Queens of England*."

But we are disposed to attribute her dejection partly to physical causes, and partly to the conduct of her courtiers and ministers. They did all in their power to conceal from her the intrigues which they were carrying on at the Court of Scotland. But her keen sagacity was not to be so deceived. She did not know the whole; but she knew that she was surrounded by men who were impatient for that new world which was to begin at her death, who had never been attached to her by affection, and who were now but very slightly attached to her by interest. Prostration and flattery could not conceal from her the cruel truth, that those whom she had trusted and promoted had never loved her, and were fast ceasing to fear her. Unable to avenge herself, and too proud to complain, she suffered sorrow and resentment to prey on her heart, till, after a long career of power, prosperity, and glory, she died, sick and weary of the world.

2. James mounted the throne; and Bacon employed all his address to obtain for himself a share of the favor of his new master. This was no difficult task. The faults of James, both as a man and as a prince, were numerous; but insensibility to the claims of genius and learning was not among them. He was, indeed, made up of two men—a witty, well-read scholar, who wrote, disputed, and harangued, and a nervous, driveling idiot, who acted.

Bacon was favorably received at court; and soon found that his chance of promotion was not diminished by the death of the Queen. He was solicitous to be knighted for two reasons which are somewhat amusing. The King had already dubbed half London, and Bacon found himself the only untitled person in his mess at Gray's Inn. This was not very agreeable to him. He had also, to quote his own words, "found an alderman's daughter, a handsome maiden, to his liking." On both these grounds, he begged his cousin Robert Cecil, "if it might please his good lordship," to use his interest in his behalf. The application was successful. Bacon was one of three hundred gentlemen who, on the coronation-day, received the honor—if it is to be so called—of knighthood. The handsome maiden, a daughter of Alder-

560 man Barnham, soon after consented to become Sir Francis's lady.

3. Under the reign of James, Bacon grew rapidly in fortune and favor. In 1604 he was appointed King's Counsel, with a fee of forty pounds a year; and a pension of sixty pounds a year was settled upon him. In 1607 he became Solicitor-General; in 1612 Attorney-General. He continued to distinguish himself in Parliament, particularly by his exertions in favor of one excellent measure on which the King's heart was set—the union of England and Scotland. It was not difficult
570 for such an intellect to discover many irresistible arguments in favor of such a scheme.

4. While actively engaged in the House of Commons and in the courts of law, he still found leisure for letters and philosophy. The noble treatise on the "Advancement of Learning," which at a later period was expanded into the "De Augmentis," appeared in 1605. The "Wisdom of the Ancients," a work which, if it had proceeded from any other writer, would have been considered as a masterpiece of wit and learning, but which adds little to the fame of Bacon, was printed in 1609.
580 In the mean time the "Novum Organum" was slowly proceeding. Several distinguished men of learning had been permitted to see sketches or detached portions of that extraordinary book; and, though they were not generally disposed to admit the soundness of the author's views, they spoke with the greatest admiration of his genius. In 1612 a new edition of the "Essays" appeared, with additions surpassing the original collection both in bulk and quality. Nor did these pursuits distract Bacon's attention from a work the most arduous, the most glorious, and the most useful that even his
590 mighty powers could have achieved—"the reducing and re-compiling," to use his own phrase, "of the laws of England."

As a Corrupt Judge.—1. Unhappily, he was at that very time employed in perverting those laws to the vilest purposes of tyranny. When Oliver St. John was brought before the Star Chamber for maintaining that the King had no right to levy benevolences, and was, for his manly and constitutional conduct, sentenced to imprisonment during the royal pleasure,

and to a fine of £5000, Bacon appeared as counsel for the prosecution. About the same time he was deeply engaged in a still more disgraceful transaction. The difference between the soaring angel and the creeping snake was but a type of the difference between Bacon the philosopher and Bacon the Attorney-General; Bacon seeking for truth, and Bacon seeking for the Seals. Those who survey only one half of his character may speak of him with unmixed admiration, or with unmixed contempt. **B**ut those only judge of him correctly who take in at one view Bacon in speculation and Bacon in action. They will have no difficulty in comprehending how one and the same man should have been far before his age and far behind it; in one line the boldest and most useful of innovators, in another line the most obstinate champion of the foulest abuses. **I**n his library, all his rare powers were under the guidance of an honest ambition, of an enlarged philanthropy, of a sincere love of truth. There no temptation drew him away from the right course. Thomas Aquinas could pay no fees. Duns Scotus could confer no peerages.

2. Far different was the situation of the great philosopher when he came forth from his study and his laboratory to mingle with the crowd which filled the galleries of Whitehall. In all that crowd there was no man equally qualified to render great and lasting services to mankind. But in all that crowd there was not a heart more set on things which no man ought to suffer to be necessary to his happiness; on things which can often be obtained only by the sacrifice of integrity and honor. **T**o be the leader of the human race in the career of improvement, to found on the ruins of ancient intellectual dynasties a more prosperous and a more enduring empire, to be revered by the latest generations as the most illustrious among the benefactors of mankind—all this was within his reach. But all this availed him nothing while some quibbling special pleader was promoted before him to the bench; while some heavy country gentleman took precedence of him by vir-

615. **Thomas Aquinas.**—One of the most influential of the scholastic theologians, born in 1224. He was a most voluminous writer on theological subjects.

616. **Duns Scotus**, one of the most famous and influential of the scholastics of the 14th century.

tue of a purchased coronet; while some buffoon, versed in all the latest scandal of the court, could draw a louder laugh from James.

3. During a long course of years, Bacon's unworthy ambition was crowned with success. His sagacity early enabled him to perceive who was likely to become the most powerful man in the kingdom. He probably knew the King's mind before it was known to the King himself, and attached himself to Villiers, while the less discerning crowd of courtiers continued to fawn on Somerset. The influence of the younger favorite became greater daily. The descent of Somerset had been a gradual and almost imperceptible lapse. It now became a headlong fall; and Villiers, left without a competitor, rapidly rose to a height of power such as no subject since Wolsey had attained.

4. To do the new favorite justice, he early exerted his influence in behalf of his illustrious friend. In March, 1617, Sir Francis was appointed keeper of the great seal. On the seventh of May, the first day of term, he rode in state to Westminster Hall, with the Lord Treasurer on his right hand, the Lord Privy Seal on his left, a long procession of students and ushers before him, and a crowd of peers, privy-councillors, and judges following in his train. Having entered his court, he addressed the splendid auditory in a grave and dignified speech, which proves how well he understood those judicial duties which he afterwards performed so ill. Even at that moment—the proudest moment of his life in the estimation of the vulgar, and, it may be, even in his own—he cast back a look of lingering affection towards those noble pursuits from which, as it seemed, he was about to be estranged. ‘The depth of the three long vacations,’ said he, ‘I would reserve

641. **Villiers.**—George Villiers, a young man of handsome person, returned from his travels about the time the King was weary of his former favorite, Somerset. Villiers at once attracted the favorable notice of the King, and soon became established in the royal favor as the most servile minion. In the course of a few years, James created him Duke of Buckingham and loaded him with exorbitant honors. The career of this rash and insolent favorite is fully described in the histories of this period.

642. **Westminster Hall** (London).—One of the most venerable remains of English architecture, first built by William Rufus in 1097 for a banqueting-hall. Of late years, many improvements and alterations have been made in this magnificent hall.

in some measure free from business of estate, and for studies, arts, and sciences, to which of my own nature I am most inclined."

5. The years during which Bacon held the great seal were among the darkest and most shameful in English history. Everything at home and abroad was mismanaged. The wavering and cowardly policy of England furnished matter of ridicule to all the nations of Europe. The love of peace which James professed would, even when indulged to an impolitic excess, have been respectable if it had proceeded from tenderness for his people. But the truth is that, while he had nothing to spare for the defense of the natural allies of England, he resorted without scruple to the most illegal and oppressive devices for the purpose of enabling Buckingham and Buckingham's relations to outshine the ancient aristocracy of the realm. Benevolences were exacted. Patents of monopoly were multiplied. All the resources which could have been employed to replenish a beggared exchequer, at the close of a ruinous war, were put in motion during this season of ignominious peace. 670 680

6. The vices of the administration must be chiefly ascribed to the weakness of the King and to the levity and violence of the favorite. But it is impossible to acquit the Lord Keeper of all share in the guilt. For those odious patents, in particular, which passed the great seal while it was in his charge, he must be held answerable. In the speech which he made on first taking his seat in his court, he had pledged himself to discharge this important part of his functions with the greatest caution and impartiality. He had declared that he "would walk in the light," "that men should see that no particular turn or end led him, but a general rule." 690

In his judicial capacity his conduct was not less reprehensible. He suffered Buckingham to dictate many of his decisions. Bacon knew as well as any man that a judge who listens to private solicitations is a disgrace to his post. He had himself, before he was raised to the woolsack, represented this strongly to Villiers, then just entering on his career. 700
 "By no means," said Sir Francis, in a letter of advice ad-

dressed to the young courtier; "by no means be you persuaded to interpose yourself, either by word or letter, in any cause depending in any court of justice, nor suffer any great man to do it where you can hinder it. If it should prevail, it perverts justice; but, if the judge be so just and of such courage as he ought to be, as not to be inclined thereby, yet it always leaves a taint of suspicion behind it." Yet he had not been Lord Keeper a month when Buckingham began to interfere in Chancery suits; and Buckingham's interference was, as might have been expected, successful.

7. We do not defend Buckingham; but what was his guilt to Bacon's? Buckingham was young, ignorant, thoughtless, dizzy with the rapidity of his ascent and the height of his position. That he should be eager to serve his relations, his flatterers, his mistresses, that he should not fully apprehend the immense importance of a pure administration of justice, that he should think more about those who were bound to him by private ties than about the public interest, all this was perfectly natural, and not altogether unpardonable. Those who intrust a petulant, hot-blooded, ill-informed lad with power, are more to blame than he for the mischief which he may do with it. How could it be expected of a lively page, raised by a wild freak of fortune to the first influence in the empire, that he should have bestowed any serious thought on the principles which ought to guide judicial decisions? Bacon was the ablest public man then living in Europe. He was near sixty years old. He had thought much, and to good purpose, on the general principles of law. He had for many years borne a part daily in the administration of justice. It was impossible that a man with a tithe of his sagacity and experience should not have known that a judge who suffers friends or patrons to dictate his decrees violates the plainest rules of duty. In fact, as we have seen, he knew this well: he expressed it admirably. Neither on this occasion nor on any other could his bad actions be attributed to any defect of the head. They sprang from quite a different cause.

8. A man who stooped to render such services to others was not likely to be scrupulous as to the means by which he

enriched himself. He and his dependents accepted large presents from persons who were engaged in Chancery suits. The amount of the plunder which he collected in this way it is impossible to estimate. There can be no doubt that he received very much more than was proved on his trial, though, it may be, less than was suspected by the public. His enemies stated his illicit gains at a hundred thousand pounds. But this was probably an exaggeration. 740

It was long before the day of reckoning arrived. During the interval between the second and third parliaments of James, the nation was absolutely governed by the Crown. 750 The prospects of the Lord Keeper were bright and serene. His great place rendered the splendor of his talents even more conspicuous, and gave an additional charm to the serenity of his temper, the courtesy of his manners, and the eloquence of his conversation. The pillaged suitor might mutter. The austere Puritan patriot might, in his retreat, grieve that one on whom God had bestowed without measure all the abilities which qualify men to take the lead in great reforms should be found among the adherents of the worst abuses. But the murmurs of the suitor and the lamentation of the patriot had scarcely any avenue to the ears of the powerful. The King, 760 and the minister who was the King's master, smiled on their illustrious flatterer. The whole crowd of courtiers and nobles sought his favor with emulous eagerness. Men of wit and learning hailed with delight the elevation of one who had so signally shown that a man of profound learning and of brilliant wit might understand, far better than any plodding dunce, the art of thriving in the world.

Reaches the Zenith of his Fortunes.—1. In the main, however, Bacon's life, while he held the great seal, was, in outward appearance, most enviable. In London he lived with great dignity at York House, the venerable mansion of his father. Here it was that, in January, 1620, he celebrated his 770

741. **Chancery suits.**—The Court of Chancery was instituted very early in English history. It had its origin in its desire to render justice complete and to moderate the vigor of other courts. The delays in chancery proceedings were long a fertile theme for legislative investigation, and the subject of much bitter satire and caustic wit. Dickens's novel called *Bleak House* is based upon the notorious delays in chancery suits.

entrance into his sixtieth year amidst a splendid circle of friends. He had then exchanged the appellation of Keeper for the higher title of Chancellor. Ben Jonson was one of the party, and wrote on the occasion some of the happiest of his rugged rhymes. All things, he tells us, seemed to smile about the old house—"the fire, the wine, the men." The spectacle
 780 of the accomplished host, after a life marked by no great disaster, entering on a green old age, in the enjoyment of riches, power, high honors, undiminished mental activity, and vast literary reputation, made a strong impression on the poet, if we may judge from those well-known lines:

"England's high Chancellor, the destined heir,
 In his soft cradle, to his father's chair,
 Whose even thread the Fates spin round and full
 Out of their choicest and their whitest wool."

In the intervals of rest which Bacon's political and judicial functions afforded, he was in the habit of retiring to Gorham-bury. At that place his business was literature, and his favorite amusement gardening, which in one of his most interesting Essays he calls "the purest of human pleasures." In his
 790 magnificent grounds he erected, at a cost of ten thousand pounds, a retreat to which he repaired when he wished to avoid all visitors, and to devote himself wholly to study. On such occasions, a few young men of distinguished talents were sometimes the companions of his retirement.

2. In January, 1621, Bacon had reached the zenith of his fortunes. He had just published the "*Novum Organum*;" and that extraordinary book had drawn forth the warmest expressions of admiration from the ablest men in Europe. He had obtained honors of a widely different kind, but perhaps
 800 not less valued by him. He had been created Baron Verulam. He had subsequently been raised to the higher dignity of Viscount St. Albans. His patent was drawn in the most flattering terms, and the Prince of Wales signed it as a witness. The ceremony of investiture was performed with great state at Theobald's, and Buckingham condescended to be one of the chief actors. Posterity has felt that the greatest of English

philosophers could derive no accession of dignity from any title which James could bestow, and, in defiance of the royal letters patent, has obstinately refused to degrade Francis Bacon into Viscount St. Albans.

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3. In a few weeks was signally brought to the test the value of those objects for which Bacon had sullied his integrity, had resigned his independence, had violated the most sacred obligations of friendship and gratitude, had flattered the worthless, had persecuted the innocent, had tampered with judges, had tortured prisoners, had plundered suitors, had wasted on paltry intrigues all the powers of the most exquisitely constructed intellect that has ever been bestowed on any of the children of men. A sudden and terrible reverse was at hand. A Parliament had been summoned. After six years of silence ⁸²⁰ the voice of the nation was again to be heard. Only three days after the pageant which was performed at Theobald's in honor of Bacon, the Houses met.

4. Want of money had, as usual, induced the King to convoke his Parliament. It may be doubted, however, whether, if he or his ministers had been at all aware of the state of public feeling, they would not have tried any expedient, or borne with any inconvenience, rather than have ventured to face the deputies of a justly exasperated nation. But they did not discern those times.

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The Parliament had no sooner met than the House of Commons proceeded, in a temperate and respectful, but most determined manner, to discuss the public grievances. Their first attacks were directed against those odious patents under cover of which Buckingham and his creatures had pillaged and oppressed the nation. The vigor with which these proceedings were conducted spread dismay through the court. It was some time before Bacon began to entertain any apprehensions. His talents and his address gave him great influence in the House, of which he had lately become a member, as in- ⁸⁴⁰ deed they must have done in any assembly. In the House of Commons he had many personal friends and many warm admirers. But at length, about six weeks after the meeting of Parliament, the storm burst.

His Downfall.—1. A committee of the Lower House had been appointed to inquire into the state of the courts of justice. On the fifteenth of March the chairman of that committee, Sir Robert Philips, member for Bath, reported that great abuses had been discovered. “The person,” said he,
850 “against whom these things are alleged is no less than the Lord Chancellor, a man so endued with all parts, both of nature and art, as that I will say no more of him, being not able to say enough.” Sir Robert then proceeded to state, in the most temperate manner, the nature of the charges. The evidence was overwhelming. Bacon’s friends could only entreat the House to suspend its judgment, and to send up the case to the Lords, in a form less offensive than an impeachment.

On the nineteenth of March the King sent a message to the Commons, expressing his deep regret that so eminent a person
860 as the Chancellor should be suspected of misconduct. His Majesty declared that he had no wish to screen the guilty from justice, and proposed to appoint a new kind of tribunal, consisting of eighteen commissioners, who might be chosen from among the members of the two Houses, to investigate the matter.

2. The Commons were not disposed to depart from their regular course of proceeding. On the same day they held a conference with the Lords, and delivered in the heads of the accusation against the Chancellor. At this conference Bacon
870 was not present. Overwhelmed with shame and remorse, and abandoned by all those in whom he had weakly put his trust, he had shut himself up in his chamber from the eyes of men. The dejection of his mind soon disordered his body. Buckingham, who visited him by the King’s order, “found his lordship very sick and heavy.” It appears from a pathetic letter which the unhappy man addressed to the Peers on the day of the conference, that he neither expected nor wished to survive his disgrace. During several days he remained in his bed, refusing to see any human being. He passionately told
880 his attendants to leave him, to forget him, never again to name his name, never to remember that there had been such a man in the world. In the mean time fresh instances of cor-

ruption were every day brought to the knowledge of his accusers. The number of charges rapidly increased from two to twenty-three. The Lords entered on the investigation of the case with laudable alacrity. Some witnesses were examined at the bar of the House. A select committee was appointed to take the depositions of others; and the inquiry was rapidly proceeding, when, on the twenty-sixth of March, the King adjourned the Parliament for three weeks.

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3. This measure revived Bacon's hopes. He made the most of his short respite. He attempted to work on the feeble mind of the King. He appealed to all the strongest feelings of James—to his fears, to his vanity, to his high notions of prerogative. Would the Solomon of the age commit so gross an error as to encourage the encroaching spirit of Parliaments? Would God's anointed, accountable to God alone, pay homage to the clamorous multitude? "Those," exclaimed Bacon, "who now strike at the chancellor will soon strike at the crown. I am the first sacrifice. I wish I may be the last." But all his eloquence and address were employed in vain. Indeed, we are firmly convinced that it was not in the King's power to save Bacon, without having recourse to measures which would have convulsed the realm. The crown had not sufficient influence over the Parliament to procure an acquittal in so clear a case of guilt. And to dissolve a Parliament which is universally allowed to have been one of the best Parliaments that ever sat, which had acted liberally and respectfully towards the Sovereign, and which enjoyed in the highest degree the favor of the people, only in order to stop a grave, temperate, and constitutional inquiry into the personal integrity of the first judge in the kingdom, would have been a measure more scandalous and absurd than any of those which were the ruin of the House of Stuart. Such a measure, while it would have been as fatal to the Chancellor's honor as a conviction, would have endangered the very existence of the monarchy. The King, acting by the advice of Williams, very properly refused to engage in a dangerous struggle with his people, for the purpose of saving from legal condemnation a minister whom it was impossible to save from dishonor. He advised Bacon to plead

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guilty, and promised to do all in his power to mitigate the punishment.

4. On the seventeenth of April the Houses reassembled, and the Lords resumed their inquiries into the abuses of the Court of Chancery. On the twenty-second, Bacon addressed to the Peers a letter, which the Prince of Wales condescended to deliver. In this artful and pathetic composition, the Chancellor acknowledged his guilt in guarded and general terms, and, while acknowledging, endeavored to palliate it. This, however, was not thought sufficient by his judges. They required a more particular confession, and sent him a copy of the charges. On the thirtieth, he delivered a paper in which he admitted, with few and unimportant reservations, the truth of the accusations brought against him, and threw himself entirely on the mercy of his peers. "Upon advised consideration of the charges," said he, "descending into my own conscience, and calling my memory to account so far as I am able, I do plainly and ingenuously confess that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence."

940 5. The Lords came to a resolution that the Chancellor's confession appeared to be full and ingenuous, and sent a committee to inquire of him whether it was really subscribed by himself. The deputies, among whom was Southampton, the common friend, many years before, of Bacon and Essex, performed their duty with great delicacy. Indeed the agonies of such a mind and the degradation of such a name might well have softened the most obdurate natures. "My lords," said Bacon, "it is my act, my hand, my heart. I beseech your lordships to be merciful to a broken reed."* They withdrew, 950 and he again retired to his chamber in the deepest dejection. The next day, the sergeant-at-arms and the usher of the House of Lords came to conduct him to Westminster Hall, where sentence was to be pronounced. But they found him so feeble that he could not leave his bed; and this excuse for

* These sad words of the fallen jurist and statesman will remind the young student of the sad farewell to all his greatness of Cardinal Wolsey, as depicted by Shakespeare in his grand play of "Henry VIII."

The words are familiar:

"Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness!" etc.

his absence was readily accepted. In no quarter does there appear to have been the smallest desire to add to his humiliation.

The sentence was, however, severe, the more severe, no doubt, because the Lords knew that it would not be executed; and that they had an excellent opportunity of exhibiting, at ⁹⁶⁰ small cost, the inflexibility of their justice, and their abhorrence of corruption. Bacon was condemned to pay a fine of forty thousand pounds, and to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure. He was declared incapable of holding any office in the State or of sitting in Parliament; and he was banished for life from the verge of the court. In such misery and shame ended that long career of worldly wisdom and worldly prosperity.

His Last Days.—1. The sentence of Bacon had scarcely been pronounced when it was mitigated. He was, indeed, sent to ⁹⁷⁰ the Tower. But this was merely a form. In two days he was set at liberty, and soon after he retired to Gorhambury. His fine was speedily released by the crown. He was next suffered to present himself at court; and at length, in 1624, the rest of his punishment was remitted. He was now at liberty to resume his seat in the House of Lords, and he was actually summoned to the next Parliament. But age, infirmity, and perhaps shame prevented him from attending. The government allowed him a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year; and his whole annual income is estimated at two thousand five ⁹⁸⁰ hundred pounds, a sum which was probably above the average income of a nobleman of that generation, and which was certainly sufficient for comfort and even for splendor. Unhappily, Bacon was fond of display, and unused to pay minute attention to domestic affairs. He was not easily persuaded to give up any part of the magnificence to which he had been accustomed in the time of his power and prosperity. No pressure of distress could induce him to part with the woods of

⁹⁷¹ **The Tower.**—The ancient and familiar citadel of London. It stands in the oldest part of the metropolis. The Tower is memorable for the distinguished persons who have been confined within its walls as prisoners of state. Since the restoration of Charles II. the crown jewels have been kept here on exhibition.

Gorhambury. "I will not," he said, "be stripped of my
 990 feathers." He traveled with so splendid an equipage and so large a retinue that Prince Charles, who once fell in with him on the road, exclaimed with surprise, "Well, do what we can, this man scorns to go out in snuff." This carelessness and ostentation reduced Bacon to frequent distress. He was under the necessity of parting with York House, and of taking up his residence, during his visits to London, at his old chambers in Gray's Inn. He had other vexations, the exact nature of which is unknown. It is evident from his will that some part of his wife's conduct had greatly disturbed and irritated
 1000 him.

2. But, whatever might be his pecuniary difficulties or his conjugal discomforts, the powers of his intellect still remained undiminished. Those noble studies for which he had found leisure in the midst of professional drudgery and of courtly intrigues gave to this last sad stage of his life a dignity beyond what power or titles could bestow. Impeached, convicted, sentenced, driven with ignominy from the presence of his sovereign, shut out from the deliberations of his fellow-nobles, loaded with debt, branded with dishonor, sinking under the
 1010 weight of years, sorrows, and diseases, Bacon was Bacon still. "My conceit of his person," says Ben Jonson, very finely, "was never increased towards him by his place or honors; but I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men and most worthy of admiration that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want."

3. The services which Bacon rendered to letters during the
 1020 last five years of his life, amidst ten thousand distractions and vexations, increase the regret with which we think on the many years which he had wasted, to use the words of Sir Thomas Bodley, "on such study as was not worthy of such a student." He commenced a "Digest of the Laws of England," a "History of England under the Princes of the House of Tudor," a body of "Natural History," a "Philosophical Ro-

mance." He made extensive and valuable additions to his Essays. He published the inestimable Treatise "De Augmentis Scientiarum." The very trifles with which he amused himself in hours of pain and languor bore the mark of his mind. 1030 The best collection of jests in the world is that which he dictated from memory, without referring to any book, on a day on which illness had rendered him incapable of serious study.

4. The great apostle of experimental philosophy was destined to be its martyr. It had occurred to him that snow might be used with advantage for the purpose of preventing animal substances from putrefying. On a very cold day, early in the spring of the year 1626, he alighted from his coach near Highgate, in order to try the experiment. He went into a cottage, bought a fowl, and with his own hands 1040 stuffed it with snow. While thus engaged he felt a sudden chill, and was soon so much indisposed that it was impossible for him to return to Gray's Inn. The Earl of Arundel, with whom he was well acquainted, had a house at Highgate. To that house Bacon was carried. The earl was absent; but the servants who were in charge of the place showed great respect and attention to the illustrious guest. Here, after an illness of about a week, he expired early on the morning of Easter-day, 1626. His mind appears to have retained its strength and liveliness to the end. He did not forget the fowl which 1050 had caused his death. In the last letter that he ever wrote, with fingers which, as he said, could not steadily hold a pen, he did not omit to mention that the experiment of the snow had succeeded "excellently well."

5. Our opinion of the moral character of this great man has already been sufficiently explained. Had his life been passed in literary retirement, he would, in all probability, have deserved to be considered, not only as a great philosopher, but as a worthy and good-natured member of society. But neither his principles nor his spirit were such as could be trusted when 1060 strong temptations were to be resisted and serious dangers to be braved.

In his will he expressed with singular brevity, energy, dignity, and pathos a mournful consciousness that his actions

had not been such as to entitle him to the esteem of those under whose observation his life had been passed, and, at the same time, a proud confidence that his writings had secured for him a high and permanent place among the benefactors of mankind. So at least we understand those striking words
 1070 which have been often quoted, but which we must quote once more: "For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and to the next age."

His confidence was just. From the day of his death his fame has been constantly and steadily progressive; and we have no doubt that his name will be named with reverence to the latest ages, and to the remotest ends of the civilized world.

Examination of Bacon's Philosophy.—1. The chief peculiarity of Bacon's philosophy seems to us to have been this,
 1080 that it aimed at things altogether different from those which his predecessors had proposed to themselves. This was his own opinion. He used means different from those used by other philosophers, because he wished to arrive at an end altogether different from theirs.

What, then, was the end which Bacon proposed to himself? It was, to use his own emphatic expression, "fruit." It was the multiplying of human enjoyments and the mitigating of human sufferings. It was "the relief of man's estate." This was the object of all his speculations in every department of
 1090 science, in natural philosophy, in legislation, in politics, in morals. Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrine, Utility and Progress.

2. The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas; in exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind. It could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the comfort of human beings.

1100 The boast of the ancient philosophers was that their doctrine formed the minds of men to a high degree of wisdom and virtue. This was, indeed, the only practical good which

the most celebrated of those teachers even pretended to effect; and, undoubtedly, if they had effected this, they would have deserved far higher praise than if they had discovered the most salutary medicines or constructed the most powerful machines. But the truth is that, in those very matters in which alone they professed to do any good to mankind, in those very matters for the sake of which they neglected all the vulgar interests of mankind, they did nothing, or worse than nothing. 1110 They promised what was impracticable; they despised what was practicable; they filled the world with long words and long beards; and they left it as wicked and as ignorant as they found it.

3. Some people may think the object of the Baconian philosophy a low object; but they cannot deny that, high or low, it has been attained. They cannot deny that every year makes an addition to what Bacon called "fruit." They cannot deny that mankind have made, and are making, great and constant progress in the road which he pointed out to them. 1120 Was there any such progressive movement among the ancient philosophers? After they had been declaiming eight hundred years, had they made the world better than when they began? Our belief is that, among the philosophers themselves, instead of a progressive improvement, there was a progressive degeneracy.

Great and various as the powers of Bacon were, he owes his wide and durable fame chiefly to this, that all those powers received their direction from common-sense. His love of the vulgar useful, his strong sympathy with the popular notions 1130 of good and evil, and the openness with which he avowed that sympathy, are the secret of his influence. There was in his system no cant, no illusion. He had no anointing for broken bones, no fine theories *de finibus*, no arguments to persuade men out of their senses. He knew that men, and philosophers as well as other men, do actually love life, health, comfort, honor, security, the society of friends, and do actually dislike death, sickness, pain, poverty, disgrace, danger, separation from those to whom they are attached. He knew that religion, though it often regulates and moderates these feel- 1140

ings, seldom eradicates them; nor did he think it desirable for mankind that they should be eradicated.

4. We have sometimes thought that an amusing fiction might be written, in which a disciple of Epictetus and a disciple of Bacon should be introduced as fellow-travelers. They come to a village where the small-pox has just begun to rage, and find houses shut up, intercourse suspended, the sick abandoned, mothers weeping in terror over their children. The Stoic assures the dismayed population that there is nothing
 1150 bad in the small-pox, and that to a wise man disease, deformity, death, the loss of friends, are not evils. The Baconian takes out a lancet and begins to vaccinate. They find a body of miners in great dismay. An explosion of noisome vapors has just killed many of those who were at work; and the survivors are afraid to venture into the cavern. The Stoic assures them that such an accident is nothing. The Baconian who has no such word at his command contents himself with devising a safety-lamp. They find a shipwrecked merchant wringing his hands on the shore. His vessel, with an inestimable
 1160 cargo, has just gone down, and he is reduced in a moment from opulence to beggary. The Stoic exhorts him not to seek happiness in things which lie without himself, and repeats the whole chapter of Epictetus. The Baconian constructs a diving-bell, goes down in it, and returns with the most precious effects from the wreck. It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the difference between the philosophy of thorns and the philosophy of fruit, the philosophy of words and the philosophy of works.

5. The vulgar notion about Bacon we take to be this, that
 1170 he invented a new method of arriving at truth, which method is called Induction; and that he detected some fallacy in the syllogistic reasoning which had been in vogue before his time. This notion is about as well founded as that of the people who, in the Middle Ages, imagined that Virgil was a great conjurer. Many who are far too well informed to talk such extravagant

1144. **Epictetus.**—A celebrated disciple of the Stoic philosophy. He lived a few years before the birth of Christ,

nonsense entertain what we think incorrect notions as to what Bacon really effected in this matter.

The inductive method has been practiced ever since the beginning of the world by every human being. It is constantly practiced by the most ignorant clown, by the most thoughtless schoolboy, by the very child at the breast. That method leads the clown to the conclusion that if he sows barley he shall not reap wheat. By that method the schoolboy learns that a cloudy day is the best for catching trout. 1180

Not only is it not true that Bacon invented the inductive method, but it is not true that he was the first person who correctly analyzed that method and explained its uses. Aristotle had long before pointed out the absurdity of supposing that syllogistic reasoning could ever conduct men to the discovery of any new principle; had shown that such discoveries must be made by induction, and by induction alone; and had given the history of the inductive process, concisely indeed, but with great perspicuity and precision. 1190

6. Bacon was not, as we have already said, the inventor of the inductive method. He was not even the person who first analyzed the inductive method correctly, though he undoubtedly analyzed it more minutely than any who preceded him. He was not the person who first showed that by the inductive method alone new truth could be discovered. But he was the person who first turned the minds of speculative men, long occupied in verbal disputes, to the discovery of new and useful truth; and, by doing so, he at once gave to the inductive method an importance and dignity which had never before belonged to it. He was not the maker of that road; he was not the discoverer of that road; he was not the person who first surveyed and mapped that road. But he was the person who first called the public attention to an inexhaustible mine of wealth which had been utterly neglected, and which was accessible by that road alone. By doing so, he caused that road, which had previously been trodden only by peasants and higg- 1200
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7. To give to the human mind a direction which it shall retain for ages is the rare prerogative of a few imperial spirits.

It cannot, therefore, be uninteresting to inquire what was the moral and intellectual constitution which enabled Bacon to exercise so vast an influence on the world.

In the temper of Bacon—we speak of Bacon the philosopher, not of Bacon the lawyer and politician—there was a singular union of audacity and sobriety. The true philosophical temperament may, we think, be described in four words—much
 1220 hope, little faith; a disposition to believe that anything, however extraordinary, may be done; an indisposition to believe that anything extraordinary has been done. In these points the constitution of Bacon's mind seems to us to have been absolutely perfect.

His Place in Literature.—1. Closely connected with this peculiarity of Bacon's temper was a striking peculiarity of his understanding. With great minuteness of observation, he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has never yet been
 1230 vouchsafed to any other human being. The Essays contain abundant proofs that no nice feature of character, no peculiarity in the ordering of a house, a garden, or a court-masque, could escape the notice of one whose mind was capable of taking in the whole world of knowledge. His understanding resembled the tent which the fairy gave to Prince Ahmed. Fold it, and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady. Spread it, and the armies of powerful sultans might repose beneath its shade.

In keenness of observation he has been equaled, though
 1240 perhaps never surpassed. But the largeness of his mind was all his own. "I have taken," said Bacon, in a letter written, when he was only thirty-one, to his uncle Lord Burleigh—"I have taken all knowledge to be my province." In any other young man, indeed in any other man, this would have been a ridiculous flight of presumption. There have been thousands of better mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, physicians, botanists, mineralogists, than Bacon. No man would go to Bacon's works to learn any particular science or art, any more

1235. **Prince Ahmed.**—The reference is to one of the famous stories of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, in which Prince Ahmed has the noted tent given him by the fairy Paribanou.

than he would go to a twelve-inch globe in order to find his way from Kennington turnpike to Clapham Common. The ¹²⁵⁰ art which Bacon taught was the art of inventing arts. The knowledge in which Bacon excelled all men was a knowledge of the mutual relations of all departments of knowledge.

2. The mode in which he communicated his thoughts was peculiar to him. He had no touch of that disputatious temper which he often censured in his predecessors. He effected a vast intellectual revolution in opposition to a vast mass of prejudices; yet he never engaged in any controversy: nay, we cannot at present recollect, in all his philosophical works, a single passage of a controversial character. All those works ¹²⁶⁰ might with propriety have been put into the form which he adopted in the work entitled "*Cogitata et visa*:" *Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit*. These are thoughts which have occurred to me: weigh them well; and take them or leave them.

Borgia said of the famous expedition of Charles the Eighth, that the French had conquered Italy not with steel, but with chalk; for that the only exploit which they had found necessary for the purpose of taking military occupation of any place had been to mark the doors of the houses where they meant to quarter. Bacon often quoted this saying, and loved ¹²⁷⁰ to apply it to the victories of his own intellect. His philosophy, he said, came as a guest, not as an enemy. She found no difficulty in gaining admittance, without a contest, into every understanding fitted, by its structure and by its capacity, to receive her. In all this we think that he acted most judiciously; first, because, as he has himself remarked, the difference between his school and other schools was a difference so fundamental that there was hardly any common ground on which a controversial battle could be fought; and, secondly, because his mind, eminently observant, pre-eminently discursive and ¹²⁸⁰ capacious, was, we conceive, neither formed by nature nor disciplined by habit for dialectical combat.

1265. **Charles the Eighth.**—King of France (1483-1498); succeeded his father, Louis XI., on the throne of France. The most important incident of his career was his conquest of Naples in 1495, to the throne of which he believed he had a claim.

3. Though Bacon did not arm his philosophy with the weapons of logic, he adorned her profusely with all the richest decorations of rhetoric. His eloquence, though not untainted with the vicious taste of his age, would alone have entitled him to a high rank in literature. He had a wonderful talent for packing thought close, and rendering it portable. In wit, if by wit be meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, he never had an equal. Indeed, he possessed this faculty, or rather this faculty possessed him.

These, however, were freaks in which his ingenuity now and then wanted, with scarcely any other object than to astonish and amuse. But it occasionally happened that, when he was engaged in grave and profound investigations, his wit obtained the mastery over all his other faculties, and led him into absurdities into which no dull man could possibly have fallen.

We cannot wish that Bacon's wit had been less luxuriant. For, to say nothing of the pleasure which it affords, it was in the vast majority of cases employed for the purpose of making obscure truth plain, of making repulsive truth attractive, of fixing in the mind forever truth which might otherwise have left but a transient impression.

4. The poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind, but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason, and to tyrannize over the whole man. No imagination was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated. It never stirred but at a signal from good sense. It stopped at the first check from good sense. Yet, though disciplined to such obedience, it gave noble proofs of its vigor. In truth, much of Bacon's life was passed in a visionary world; amid things as strange as any that are described in the Arabian Tales, or amidst buildings more sumptuous than the palace of Aladdin. Yet in his magnificent day-dreams there was nothing wild, nothing but what sober reason sanctioned. He knew that all the secrets feigned by poets to have been written in the books of enchanters are worthless when compared with the mighty secrets which are really written in the book of nature, and which, with time and patience, will be

read there. He knew that all the wonders wrought by all the talismans in fable were trifles compared to the wonders which might reasonably be expected from the philosophy of fruit; and that, if his words sank deep into the minds of men, they would produce effects such as superstition had never ascribed to the incantations of Merlin and Michael Scott. It was here that he loved to let his imagination loose. He loved to picture to himself the world as it would be when his philosophy should, in his own noble phrase, "have enlarged the bounds of human empire."

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5. One of the most remarkable circumstances in the history of Bacon's mind is the order in which its powers expanded themselves. With him the fruit came first and remained to the last; the blossoms did not appear till late. In general, the development of the fancy is to the development of the judgment what the growth of a girl is to the growth of a boy. The fancy attains at an earlier period to the perfection of its beauty, its power, and its fruitfulness; and, as it is first to ripen, it is also first to fade. It has generally lost something of its bloom and freshness before the sterner faculties have¹³⁴⁰ reached maturity; and is commonly withered and barren while those faculties still retain all their energy. It rarely happens that the fancy and the judgment grow together. It happens still more rarely that the judgment grows faster than the fancy. This seems, however, to have been the case with Bacon. His boyhood and youth appear to have been singularly sedate. His gigantic scheme of philosophical reform is said by some writers to have been planned before he was fifteen, and was undoubtedly planned while he was still young. He observed as vigilantly, meditated as deeply, and judged as¹³⁵⁰ temperately when he gave his first work to the world as at the close of his long career. But, in eloquence, in sweetness and

1326. **Merlin.**—Known in poetry and song as the prince of enchanters. Allusion is made to him in the *Faerie Queene*, Scott's *Kenilworth*, Tennyson's *Idylls* ("Vivien"), and in countless other writers.

Michael Scott.—A mediæval scholar and philosopher of the 13th century whose real history is obscure. He was regarded by the common people as a magician on account of his experiments in natural philosophy.

variety of expression, and in richness of illustration, his later writings are far superior to those of his youth.

6. It is by the Essays that Bacon is best known to the multitude. The "Novum Organum" and the "De Augmentis" are much talked of, but little read. They have produced, indeed, a vast effect on the opinions of mankind; but they have produced it through the operation of intermediate agents.

1360 They have moved the intellects which have moved the world. It is in the Essays alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate contact with the minds of ordinary readers.* There he opens an exoteric school and talks to plain men, in language which everybody understands, about things in which everybody is interested. He has thus enabled those who must otherwise have taken his merits on trust to judge for themselves; and the great body of readers have, during several generations, acknowledged that the man who has treated with such consummate ability questions with which they are fa-

1370 miliar may well be supposed to deserve all the praise bestowed on him by those who have sat in his inner school.

7. Without any disparagement to the admirable treatise "De Augmentis," we must say that, in our judgment, Bacon's greatest performance is the first book of the "Novum Organum." All the peculiarities of his extraordinary mind are found there in the highest perfection. Many of the aphorisms, but particularly those in which he gives examples of the influence of the *idola*, show a nicety of observation that has never been surpassed. Every part of the book blazes with wit, but

1380 with wit which is employed only to illustrate and decorate truth. No book ever made so great a revolution in the mode of thinking, overthrew so many prejudices, introduced so many new opinions. Yet no book was ever written in a less contentious spirit. It truly conquers with chalk and not with

* "I am old-fashioned enough to admire Bacon, whose remarks are taken in and assented to by persons of ordinary capacity, and seem nothing very profound. But when a man comes to reflect and observe, and his faculties enlarge, he then sees more in them than he did at first, and more still as he advances farther—his admiration of Bacon's profundity increasing as he himself grows intellectually. Bacon's wisdom is like the seven-league boots, which would fit the giant or the dwarf, except only that the dwarf cannot take the same stride in them."—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

steel. Proposition after proposition enters into the mind, is received not as an invader, but as a welcome friend, and, though previously unknown, becomes at once domesticated. But what we most admire is the vast capacity of that intellect which, without effort, takes in at once all the domains of science, all the past, the present, and the future, all the errors¹³⁹⁰ of two thousand years, all the encouraging signs of the passing times, all the bright hopes of the coming age.

8. Cowley, who was among the most ardent, and not among the least discerning, followers of the new philosophy, has, in one of his finest poems, compared Bacon to Moses standing on Mount Pisgah. It is to Bacon, we think, as he appears in the first book of the "*Novum Organum*," that the comparison applies with peculiar felicity. There we see the great Law-giver looking round from his lonely elevation on an infinite expanse; behind him a wilderness of dreary sands and bitter¹⁴⁰⁰ waters in which successive generations have sojourned, always moving, yet never advancing, reaping no harvest and building no abiding city; before him a goodly land, a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey. While the multitude below saw only the flat sterile desert in which they had so long wandered, bounded on every side by a near horizon, or diversified only by some deceitful mirage, he was gazing from a far higher stand on a far lovelier country, following with his eye the long course of fertilizing rivers, through ample pastures, and under the bridges of great capitals, measuring the distances¹⁴¹⁰ of marts and havens, and portioning out all those wealthy regions from Dan to Beersheba.

His Character.—1. It is painful to turn back from contemplating Bacon's philosophy to contemplate his life. Yet without so turning back it is impossible fairly to estimate his powers. He left the University at an earlier age than that at which most people repair thither. While yet a boy he was plunged into the midst of diplomatic business. Thence he passed to the study of a vast technical system of law, and

1393. **Cowley, Abraham** (1618-1667).—An accomplished and influential writer. He was highly regarded among the writers of his time both as a poet and an essayist.

¹⁴²⁰ worked his way up through a succession of laborious offices to the highest post in his profession. In the mean time he took an active part in every parliament; he was an adviser of the crown; he paid court with the greatest assiduity and address to all whose favor was likely to be of use to him; he lived much in society; he noted the slightest peculiarities of character and the slightest changes of fashion. Scarcely any man has led a more stirring life than that which Bacon led from sixteen to sixty. Scarcely any man has been better entitled to be called a thorough man of the world. The founding of a new
¹⁴³⁰ philosophy, the imparting of a new direction to the minds of speculators, this was the amusement of his leisure, the work of hours occasionally stolen from the woosack and the council board. This consideration, while it increases the admiration with which we regard his intellect, increases also our regret that such an intellect should so often have been unworthily employed. He well knew the better course, and had, at one time, resolved to pursue it. "I confess," said he in a letter written when he was still young, "that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends."

¹⁴⁴⁰ 2. Had his civil ends continued to be moderate, he would have been, not only the Moses, but the Joshua of philosophy. He would have fulfilled a large part of his own magnificent predictions. He would have led his followers, not only to the verge, but into the heart of the promised land. He would not merely have pointed out, but would have divided the spoil. Above all, he would have left, not only a great, but a spotless name. Mankind would then have been able to esteem their illustrious benefactor. We should not then be compelled to regard his character with mingled contempt and admiration,
¹⁴⁵⁰ with mingled aversion and gratitude. We should not then regret that there should be so many proofs of the narrowness and selfishness of a heart the benevolence of which was yet large enough to take in all races and all ages. We should not then have to blush for the disingenuousness of the most devoted worshiper of speculative truth, for the servility of the boldest champion of intellectual freedom. We should not then have seen the same man at one time far in the van, and

at another time far in the rear of his generation. We should not then be forced to own that he who first treated legislation as a science was among the last Englishmen who¹⁴⁶⁰ used the rack; that he who first summoned philosophers to the great work of interpreting nature was among the last Englishmen who sold justice. And we should conclude our survey of a life placidly, honorably, beneficently passed "in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries,"* with feeling very different from those with which we now turn away from the checkered spectacle of so much glory and so much shame.

* From a letter of Bacon to Lord Burleigh.

TEST QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Give some details of Macaulay's early life.
2. Anecdotes illustrating his precocity.
3. Incidents showing his early love for books and reading.
4. His career at Cambridge University.
5. Incidents which led Macaulay to write his essay on Milton.
6. Mention the subjects of Macaulay's most important essays.
7. What are the chief characteristics of these celebrated essays?
8. What political honors were conferred upon Macaulay?
9. His appointment to an office in India and his residence in that country.
10. His return to England and subsequent career in Parliament.
11. What fine martial ballads were published in 1842?
12. When was his History first published?—its success?
13. Give some details of the scope of this work.
14. What can you tell of Macaulay's career as a public speaker?
15. The death of the great historian in 1859?
16. Macaulay's style—its prominent characteristics?
17. What adverse criticisms have been made on his writings?
18. How will you account for the remarkable popularity of all that Macaulay has written?
19. Personal life of Macaulay—its chief characteristics?
20. Incidents and anecdotes to illustrate the same.
21. When was the essay on Bacon written, and for what periodical?
22. In a general way, state what opinion Macaulay had of this essay.
23. Does Macaulay's view of Bacon coincide with that of most of the best writers on this subject?
24. How does the essay compare with others by Macaulay, both in learning and in style?
25. What evidence is there from the essay itself to prove the author's statement that he bestowed great care upon its composition?

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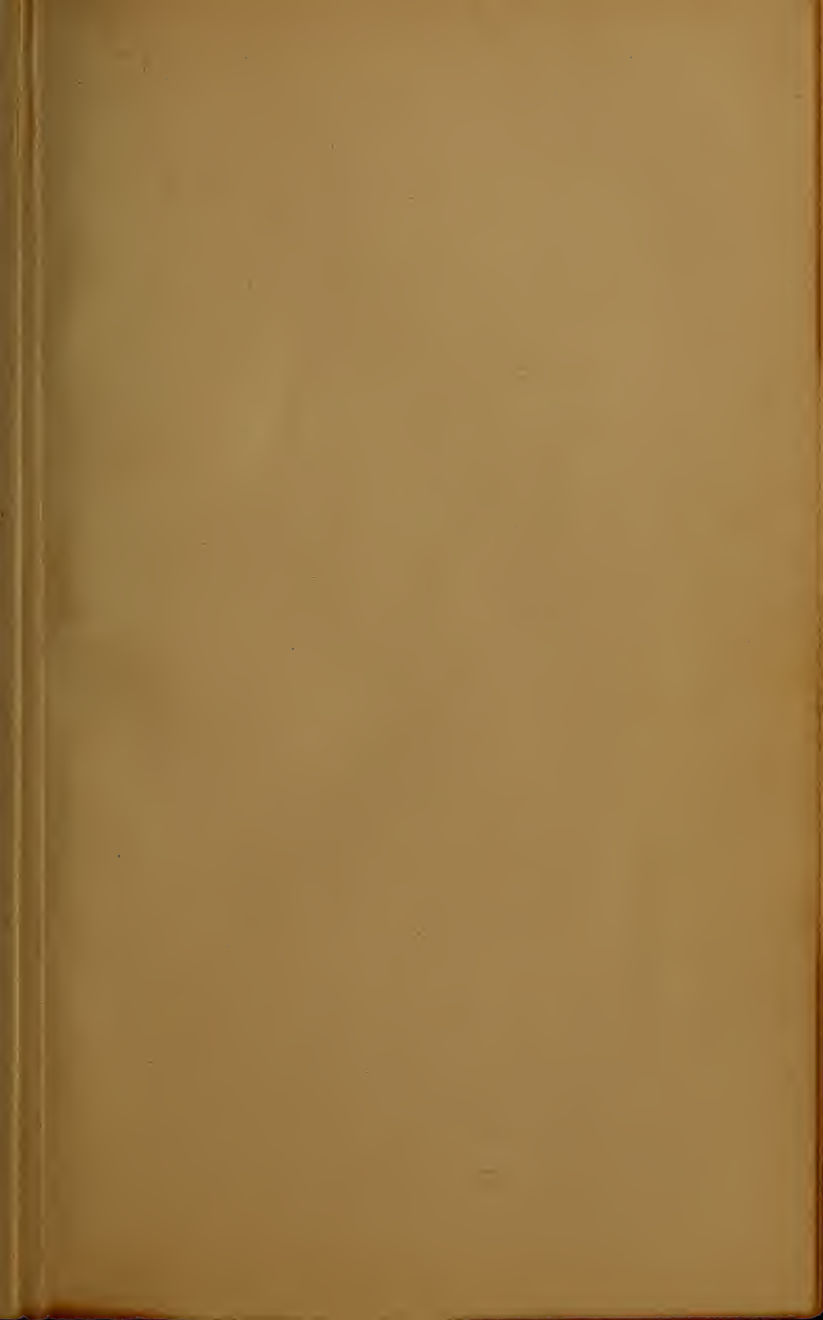
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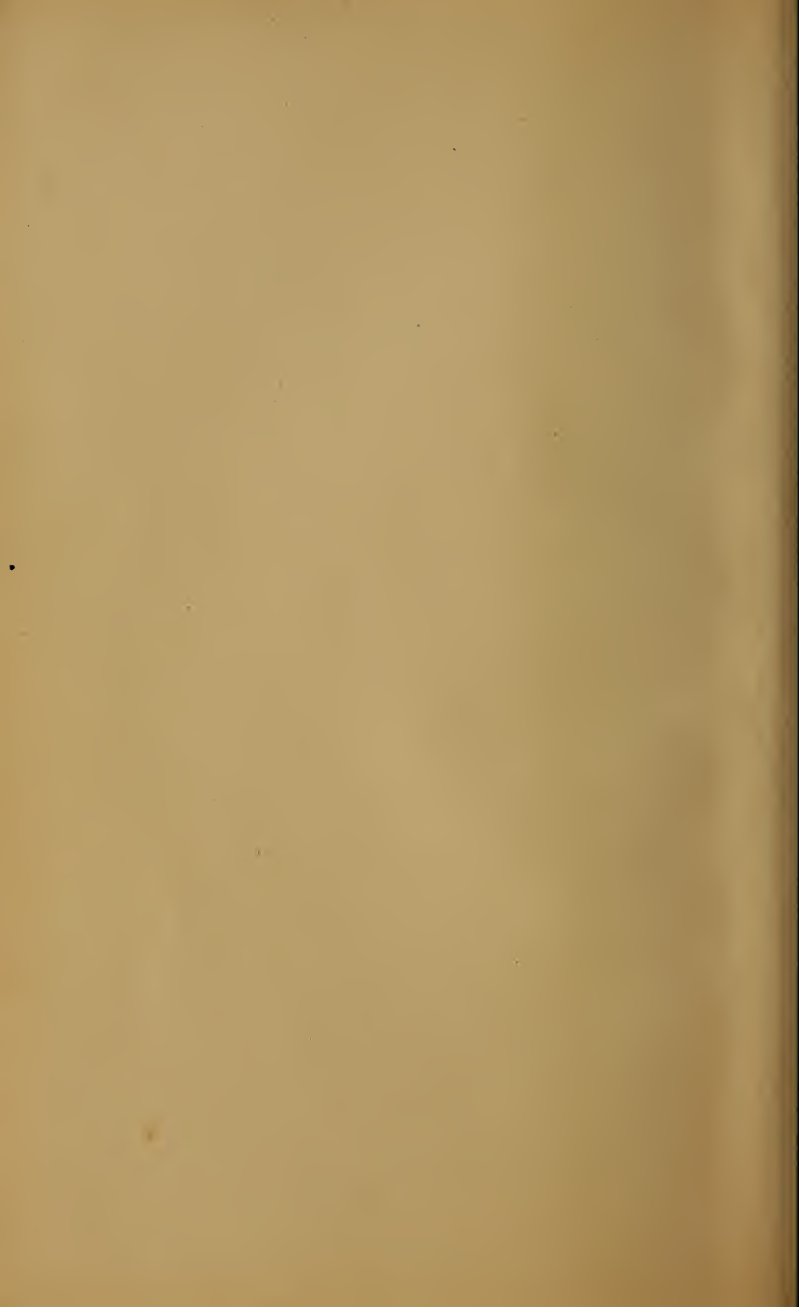
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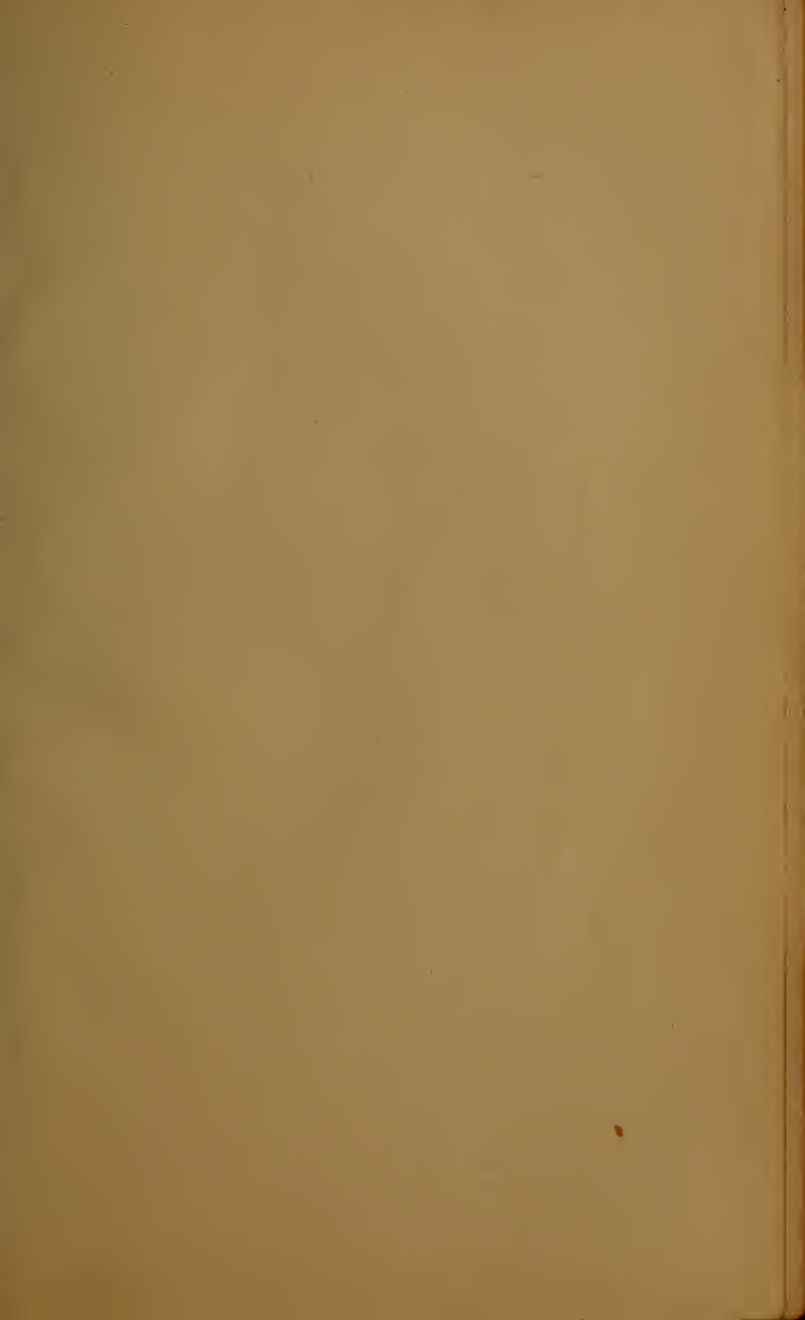
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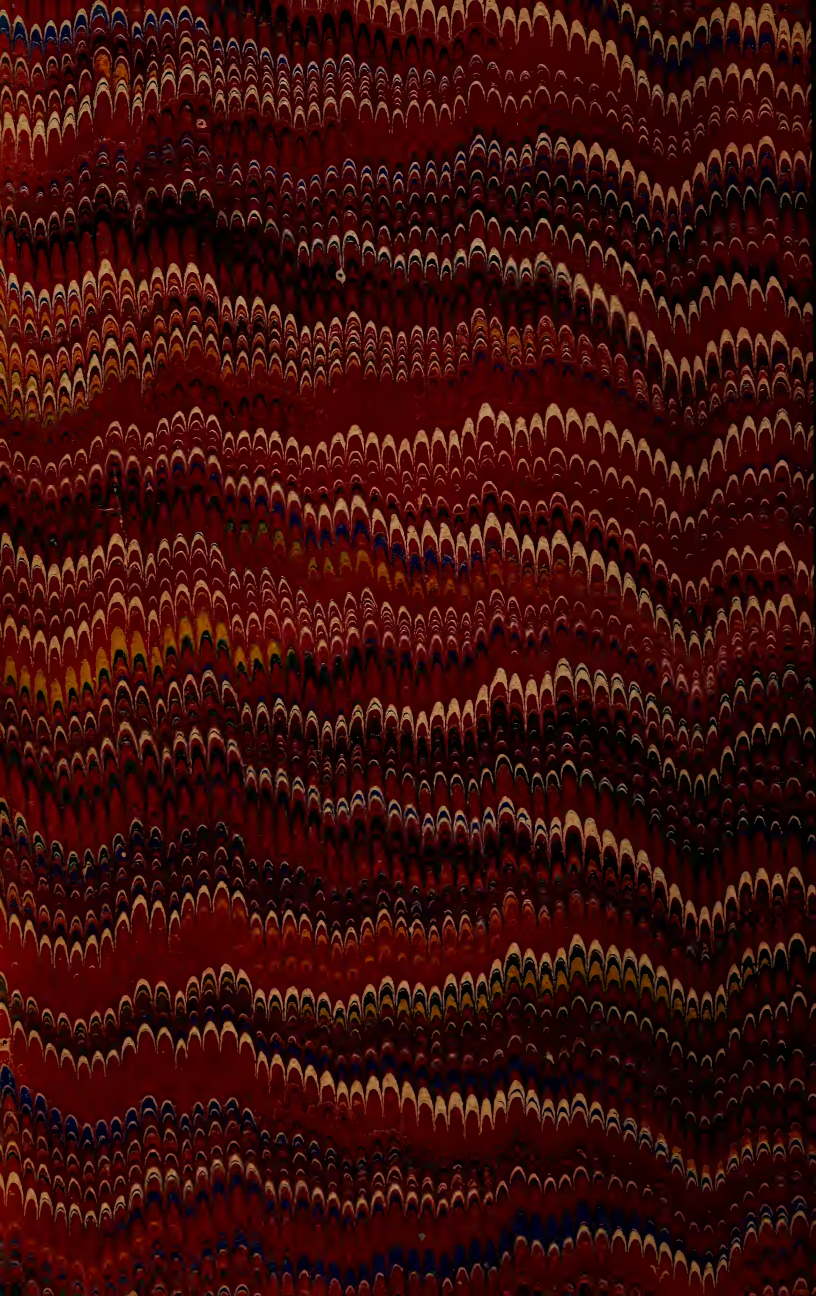


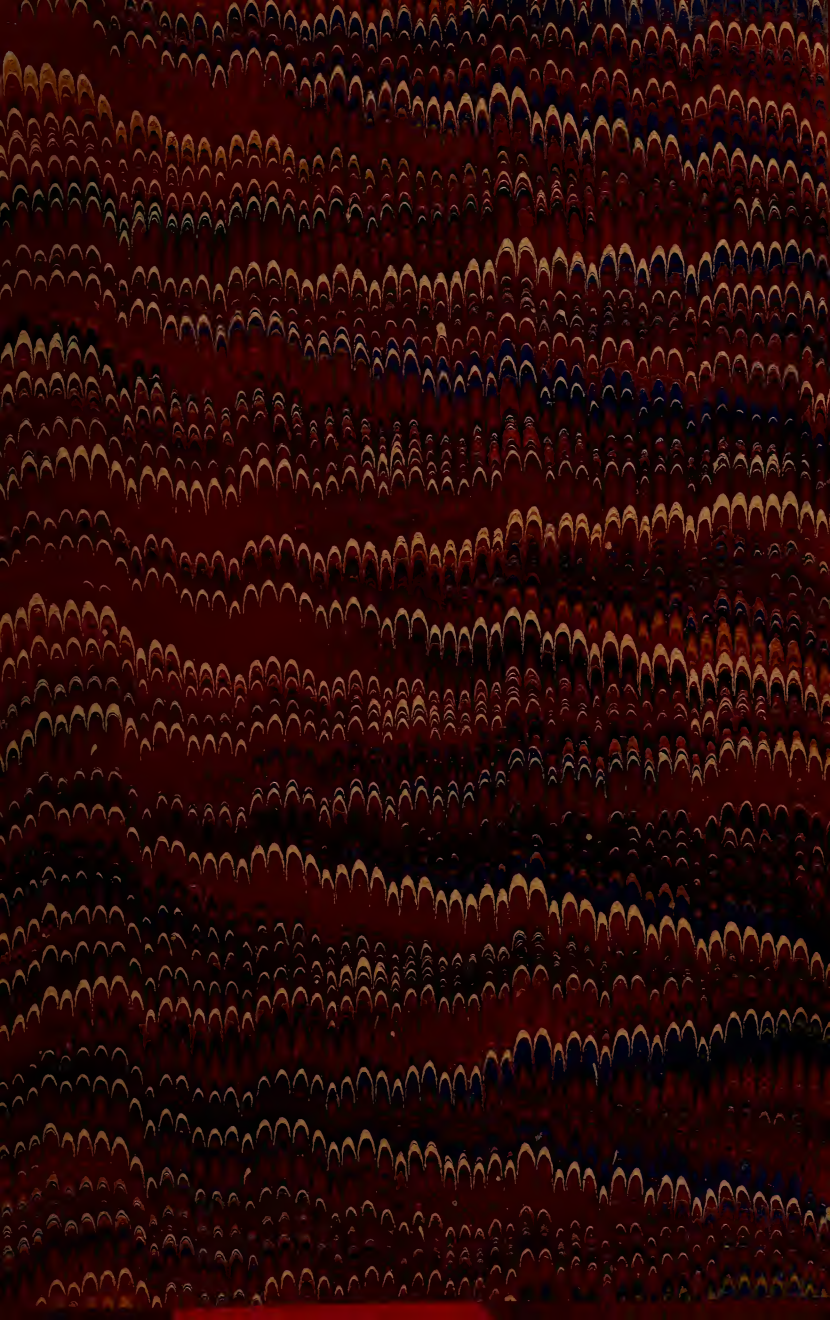




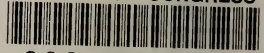








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